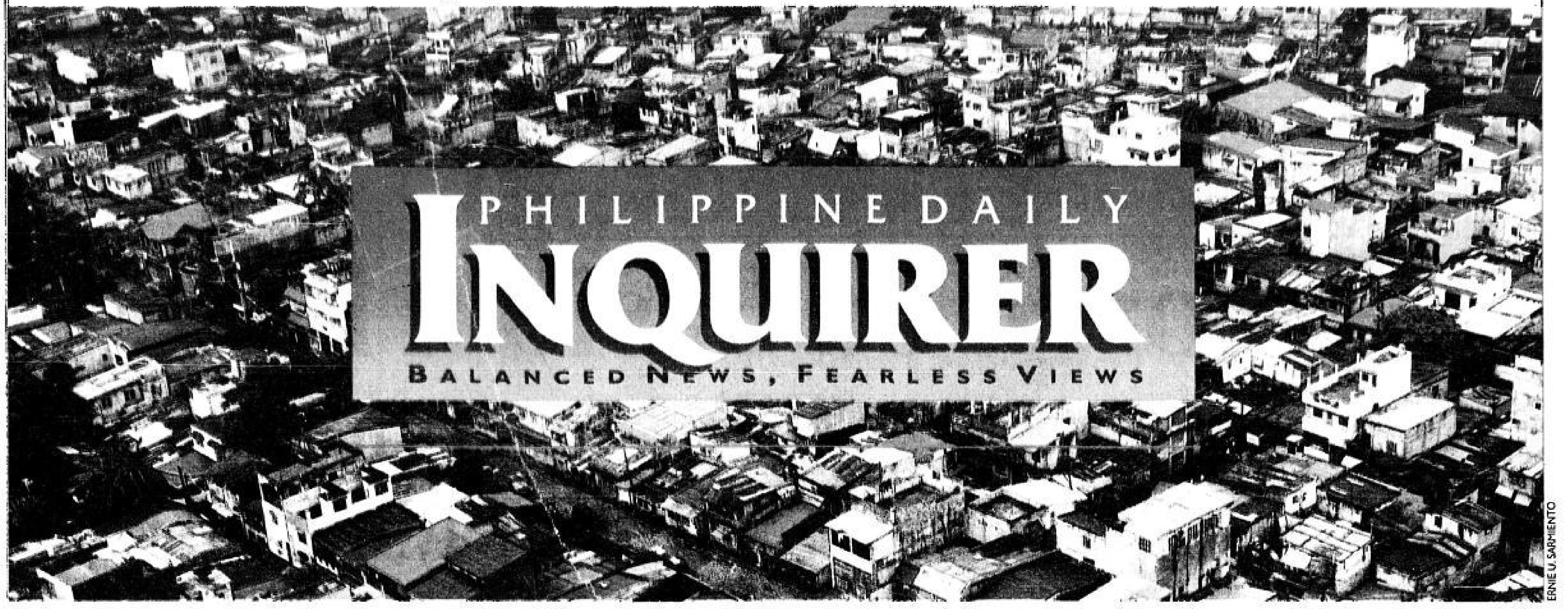
Wednesday, August 29, 2007 ★★ 9 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 262 P18 website: www.inquirer.net



PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

EVEN HOUSES SING IN THE RAIN: After the rains of the past few days, the rooftops of houses even in highly congested Caloocan City looked scrubbed and washed, their emergent colors vividly bright and clean.

ACROSS / A18
Gov't, MILF in secret meet agree to keep ceasefire monitors

MOTORING / B2-1
RP haven for classic car restoration

WORLD / A24
US attorney general, longtime aide to Bush, steps down

METRO / A21
Mystery shrouds death of UP student councilor; hazing suspected

WORLD / A23
Taliban agree to free 19 South Korean church volunteers

Joma Sison arrested

GMA says it's giant step toward peace, justice

THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS—IN A MOVE PRESident Macapagal-Arroyo hailed as "a giant step toward peace," Dutch police arrested Filipino communist rebel leader Jose Maria Sison on Tuesday on suspicion of ordering the murder of two former allies in the Philippines.

Jose Ma. Sison, founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New People's Army, was arrested in Utrecht, the central Dutch city where he has lived in exile for 20 years.

"Sison was suspected of giving orders, from the Netherlands, to murder his former political associates in the Philippines, Romulo Kintanar and Arturo Tabara," said a statement from the Public Prosecutor's Office in The Hague.

Sison was due to appear in a Hague court on Friday.

"It's a giant step toward peace, a victory for justice and the rule of law," Ms Arroyo said in a statement in Manila issued by Malacañang.

Ms Arroyo was informed of Sison's sudden arrest while she was presiding over a National Security Council meeting called to discuss the crafting of an amnesty bill for communist rebels.

Sison now calls himself a political consultant for the Dutch-based National Democratic

JOMA/ A10

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

THE EXILE FEELS RIGHT AT HOME: Jose Ma. Sison, founding chair of the Communist Party of the Philippines, makes a congenial guide for the INQUIRER photographer as he toured him in Utrecht, the Netherlands, last April.

131 solons file historic bill vs gov't abductions

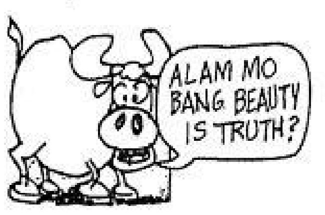
By Christian V. Esguerra

THE AGONIZING SEARCH FOR activist Jonas Burgos and the two missing University of the Philippines students yesterday got a boost courtesy of a bill penalizing state agents implicated in involuntary disappearances.

In what was described as "historic," House Bill No. 2263 is coauthored by 131 lawmakers, a number way above the needed majority to ratify a measure in the House of Representatives.

All five Deputy Speakers and Majority Leader Arthur Defensor have signed up to coauthor the bill, according to principal author Rep. Satur Ocampo of the militant Bayan Muna.

131 SOLONS/ A8



ALAM MO BANG BEAUTY IS TRUTH?

Imeldific beauty tip: Unity, not frivolity

By Fe Zamora

AND NOW, THIS BEAUTY tip from former first lady Imelda Marcos: Write about "beauty that unites, not the Imeldific kind that's frivolous."

Beauty that unites, Marcos said in a 30-minute

IMELDIFIC/ A10

DOTC chief sued over broadband deal

By Volt Contreras

SAYING THE PUBLIC WAS MISled about the National Broadband Network (NBN) project, an opposition congressman yesterday lodged a criminal complaint against Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza and several others who sealed the $329-million deal with a Chinese firm without public bidding.

Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla (NP) accused Mendoza and two assistant secretaries of the Department of Transportation and Communications of "giving undue advantage" to ZTE Corp., China's third largest telecommunications firm, which bagged the NBN project aimed at linking government agencies nationwide through a common electronic backbone.

Padilla said the DOTC officials "discriminated against and deliberately refused to act on the proposal" presented by Amsterdam Holdings Inc. (AHI), a company partially owned by Jose de Venecia III, a son and namesake of the House Speaker.

"The project cost of over $329 million that will be shoul-

DOTC/ A16

Now, PNP pins Jonas kidnap on NPA rebs

By Alcuin Papa

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL Police yesterday produced three confessed communists who claimed to have witnessed the kidnapping of Jonas Burgos by comrades out to purge him on suspicion he was pilfering funds of the movement allegedly as a political and intelligence officer.

The mother of Burgos called the disclosure an "outright lie"

NOW, PNP PINS/ A8

GMA Senate allies to stop playing of 'Garci' tape

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

WITH THE SENATE POISED TO take a crucial vote today on reviving its probe into the "Hello Garci" wiretap scandal, administration senators threatened to go to the Supreme Court to block the playing of the controversial tape dealing with supposed phone conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

Administration senators, led by Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, yesterday made a spirited drive to narrow down the scope of the probe, saying it should be limited to the military action of wiretapping people without delving into the contents of the tape.

Former intelligence officer T/Sgt. Vidal Doble triggered calls in Congress for a reopening of the "Hello Garci" issue when he said in video testimony that he and other agents listened in on the conversations between Ms Arroyo and Garcil-

GMA SENATE/ A16

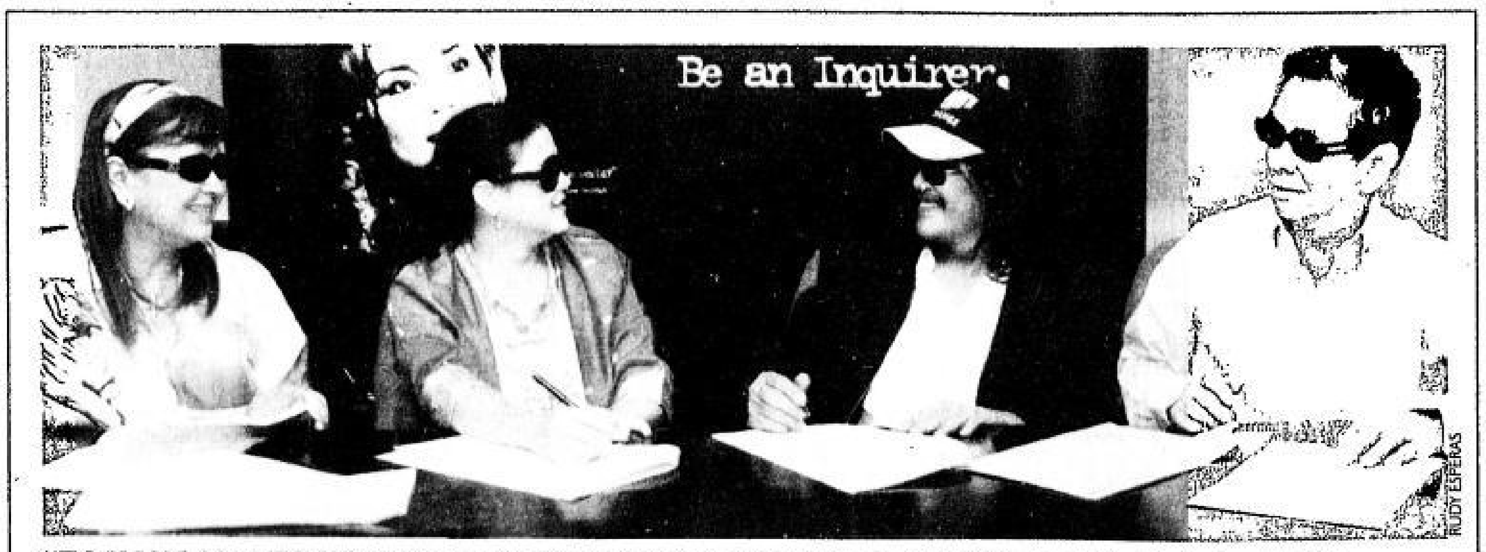
Climbers' 'new Everest': Green mountains

By TJ Burgonio

ON A CLEAR DAY, THEY WOULD ESCAPE the city, catch a bus and travel for hours to the foot of forests, lugging backpacks stuffed not with their usual climbing gear of harnesses, carabiners and rope, but with tree saplings.

Without fanfare, seasoned climbers from the Mountaineering Federation of the Philippines

CLIMBERS'/ A10



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RUDY ESPERAS

"TO HAVE AND TO HOLD" is the title of the first-ever "diario novela" written by Carlo J. Caparas exclusively for the INQUIRER. PDI president/CEO Alexandra R. Prieto-Romualdez (2nd, left) and Caparas (2nd, right) sign the contract on Tuesday for his comics strip to run starting next week. Caparas bills his diario novela as "a love story destined to last forever." His wife, Donna Villa, and PDI publisher Isagani Yambot flank the signatories.

Salonga asks high court to free tortured pastor

By Leila B. Salaverria

RAMON MAGSAYSAY AWARDEE Jovito Salonga and Church leaders yesterday joined tortured Pastor Berlin Guerrero in asking the Supreme Court to order his release, claiming that the murder charge filed against him was baseless.

Guerrero, of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), and other petitioners said his torture at the

SALONGA/ A19

EZ2
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SIX DIGIT
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SUERTRES
Mid-Day 5 3 0 | Evening 5 5 4
(All in exact order)

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Second FrontPage

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon and Palawan will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Mostly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Mostly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Mostly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Mostly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Mostly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Mostly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

COMPILED BY: SCHATZI QUODALA, PDI RESEARCH/08/28/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

PNP scored on Basilan list

ZAMBOANGA CITY—A Basilan police officer said the military apparently took a short cut in securing arrest warrants against 127 persons suspected of beheading 10 Marine soldiers in Al-Barka town on July 10.

Senior Supt. Salik Macapantar, the Basilan police chief, said the Philippine National Police was "now obliged to explain why even the names of those already dead or those who are really innocent were included in the list."

He said that based on the PNP's initial investigation, only eight people were actually involved in the Al-Barka beheadings but the Marines later submitted eight more names, to make 16.

And while they were conducting further investigation, Macapantar said the Marines had secured more warrants for a total of 127 suspects.

Lamitan City Mayor Roderick Furigay said he was surprised when Ustadz Ameer Usman Mangkabong, a Lamitan spiritual leader, turned up as a suspect.

"An Ameer is equivalent to a bishop and I can vouch for his innocence," Furigay said.

Macapantar said the latest investigation showed that there are only 16 probable suspects in the Al-Barka beheadings. Two have been killed while another suspect has surrendered.

"So our list now contains 13 names," he said.

Meanwhile, as the military resumed offensive operations against the Abu Sayyaf extremist group in Basilan and Sulu, human rights advocates expressed concern that more innocent civilians would be mistaken for Abu Sayyaf bandits.

Lawyer Ulka Ulama cited several cases of mistaken identity that have caused much distress to some Tausug families.

Last Aug. 19, Ulama said soldiers raided the house of the Isnirani family in Barangay Tantung, Indanan and arrested three family members.

Ulama said the human rights abuses of the military could be attributed to the fact that residents rarely complain.

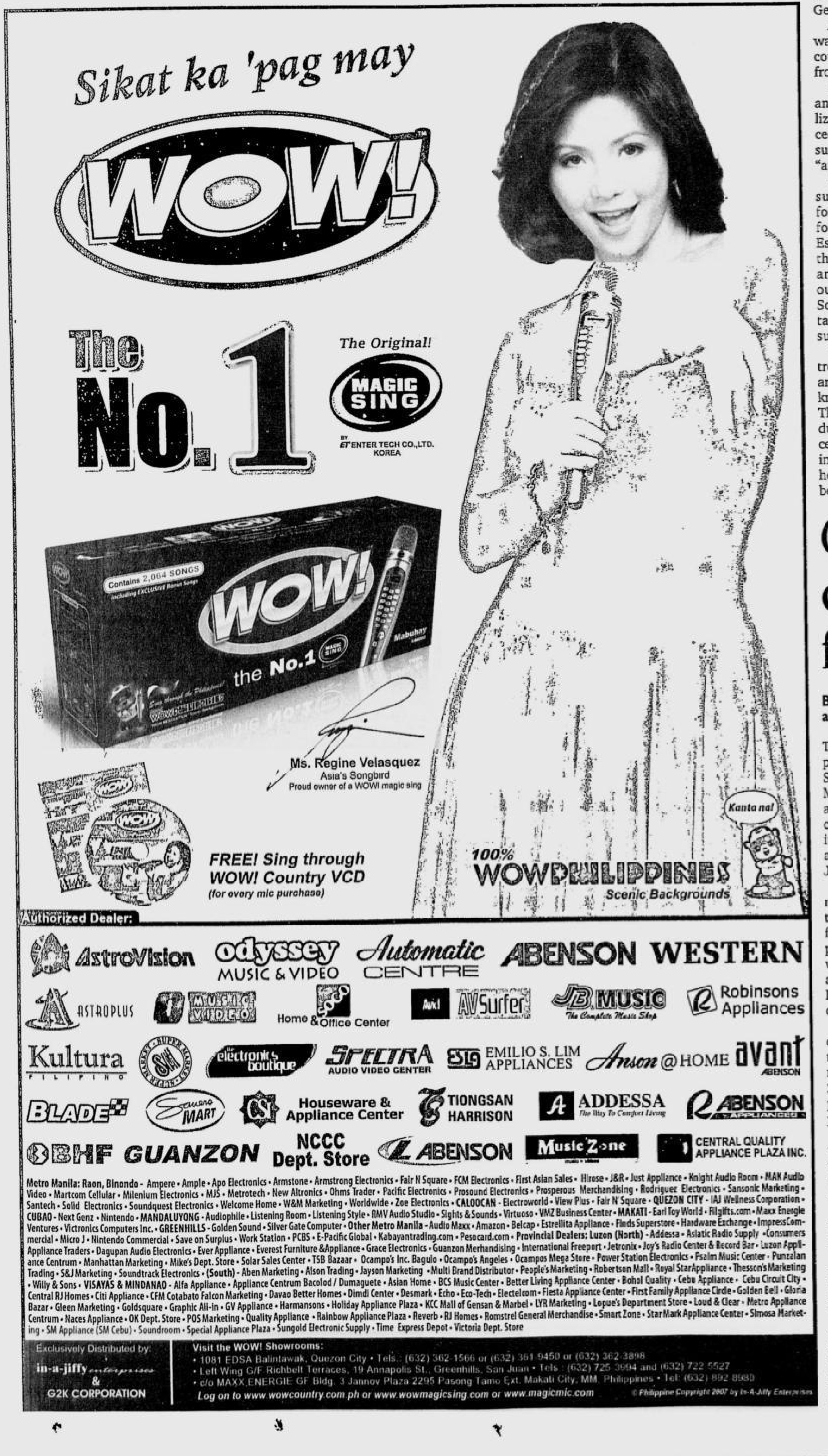
Brig. Gen. Ruperto Pabustan, chief of the joint special operations command, has consistently denied his troops were abusing the rights of civilians.

"It will not help us if we do that," he said.

Meanwhile, the military yesterday said government forces have shelled an Abu Sayyaf stronghold in Basilan ins preparation for an offensive.

Mortar fire started Monday on a suspected Abu Sayyaf hideout in the jungles of Basilan, said spokesperson Capt. Niel Estrella.

"It's part of our offensive, to soften the target defense. This is to support our ground troops" massed around the al-Qaida linked group, he said by telephone. *Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao, and AFP*



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Army chief says soldiers to stay loyal

By Christine O. Avendano and Christian V. Esguerra

THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF the Armed Forces of the Philippines are professional enough not to be swayed into joining any destabilization moves against the government, according to new Army chief Lt. Gen. Alexander Yano.

At the same time, Yano warned those who would do so could face "drastic actions" from the military.

He said he had not received any report of efforts to destabilize the government but conceded that recent political issues could be "exploited" by "anti-government groups."

"*Alam naman ninyo yung* issues (You know the issues), for example, the verdict of former President (Joseph) Estrada, the Garci tapes and the Basilan incident. These are issues that [have] come out in the last several days. So I've said, some groups may take advantage of these issues," Yano said.

"But let me tell you that our troops, including our officers, are professional enough. They know what they are fighting for. They know what their sworn duty is, their immediate concern and that is to fight against insurgency and other threats," he said. "I don't think they will be distracted from their main mission."

Yano spoke to reporters on the eve of his scheduled visit today to Zamboanga City, Basilan and Sulu, where troops have renewed offensives against the Abu Sayyaf Group.

He said he was visiting the three provinces to get to know the units there, as well as to see if they're fit to fight the enemy.

Yano along with other top military officials led by Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., are expected to attend today's turnover ceremonies for outgoing Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Nestor Allaga, the new commander of Western Mindanao Command based in Zamboanga City.

Meanwhile, an administration lawmaker yesterday belittled Estrada's capability to generate an "Edsa III" crowd in the event that the deposed president is convicted of plunder by the Sandiganbayan.

Nevertheless, Rep. Antonio Cuenco, chair of the House committee on foreign affairs, urged law enforcers not to let their guard down for possible "destabilization" efforts by Estrada's supporters.

"Even the United Opposition, coupled with militant forces, failed with [its] protests at the height of the GMA resignation call," he said in a statement.

6,000 soldiers, cops mobilized for Erap verdict

By Michael Lim Ubac and Alcuin Papa

THOUSANDS OF TROOPS AND police will be deployed at the Sandiganbayan and around Malacañang to ensure peace and order when the antigraft court hands down next month its verdict on the plunder case against former President Joseph Estrada.

Deputy Director General Reynaldo Varilla, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO), said some 6,000 policemen and military troops will be deployed on Sept. 15 in anticipation of rallies by pro-Estrada groups. "If needed we can add more," he added.

Maj. Gen. Ben Dolorfino, chief of the Armed Forces National Capital Region Command (NCRComm), said that 2,000 soldiers will be deployed to augment antiriot policemen.

Of the 6,000 police and military forces, 2,000 from the National Capital Region Command will be sent to Malacañang.

Varilla advised the public to be calm and accept the verdict in the Estrada trial.

He also said they would take the former president into custody once the Sandiganbayan hands down a guilty verdict.

In a media forum yesterday in Camp Crame, Varilla said they have been planning contingency security measures since July in preparation for the court's verdict on Estrada.

Varilla also advised rallyists to "abide by the rule of law" and follow the "no permit, no rally" policy.

As long as he is NCRPO chief, Varilla vowed he would not allow a repeat of the siege on Malacañang by pro-Estrada supporters in May 2001.

After a six-year trial, officials said on Tuesday that a verdict would be delivered on or before Sept. 15.

Malacañang said the deployment of thousands of police and military personnel was not an overkill.

Cabinet Secretary Ricardo Saludo told reporters that the Philippine National Police would be able to explain why the additional deployment of security forces was necessary.

He said preparations for the conclusion of Estrada's trial was "based on PNP's understanding of the situation."

He said Malacañang officials had left the security arrangements for such a big event to the judgement of the PNP and the Armed Forces.

Saludo clarified that Malacañang was not accusing anyone of engaging in another destabilization attempt.

"Maybe, there are groups that issue such statements. But it did not come from us since we ourselves are doing everything to ensure that the former President will be treated accordingly ... under the law and based on orders by the Sandiganbayan," he said.

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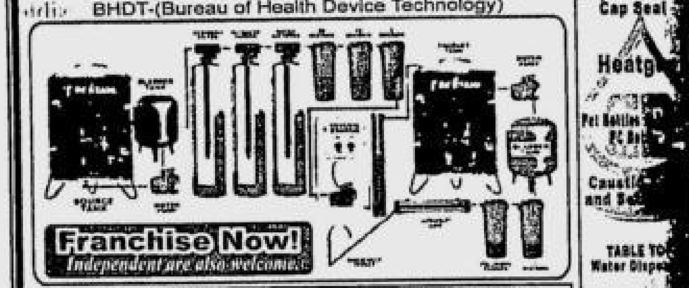
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No. 14, s-2007

TO : ALL MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM (NHIP), ALL PHILHEALTH ACCREDITED HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS, AND ALL OTHERS CONCERNED

SUBJECT : Granting of Reward for Information Leading to the Discovery and Recovery of Unclaimed PhilHealth Reimbursements

Appurtenant to Republic Act 7875 otherwise known as the National Health Insurance Act as amended by R.A. 9241, the Corporation was given the fiduciary responsibility of providing an effective stewardship in the administration of the Health Insurance Fund (HIF). PhilHealth noted that a huge amount of PhilHealth reimbursements that should have been returned to the members remain in the possession of accredited health care providers. Pursuant to Board Resolution No. 762, s-2005 dated January 27, 2005 and vis-a-vis with PHIC's duty and responsibility to efficiently deliver services to the satisfaction of its members, a program to encourage people to provide information for the successful recovery of unclaimed PhilHealth reimbursements which remain in the possession of the accredited health care providers is hereby implemented.

In this regard, an incentive or reward, as the case may be, shall be given to the informant for any information regarding unclaimed PhilHealth reimbursements.

The following requisites should be met:

a. That the informant is neither an official, employee, contractual or contractor of the Corporation nor a relative of such within the sixth (6th) degree of consanguinity or affinity;

b. That the information given is specifically on unclaimed PhilHealth reimbursements, the amount thereof, the name of the accredited health care provider, and the supporting documents, if any;

c. That such information is not yet in the possession of, or does not refer to a case already pending or previously examined or investigated by the Corporation; and

d. That the unclaimed PhilHealth reimbursements have been successfully recovered by the Corporation either through settlement or court action.

The informant shall execute a subscribed and sworn to affidavit containing relevant data regarding the unclaimed PhilHealth reimbursement such as its amount and the name of the health care provider. The said information shall then be submitted, together with any document supporting the information, to the PhilHealth Reward Committee (PRC) which, in turn, shall verify the veracity of the said information. All information filed with the PRC shall be treated with confidentiality.

This Circular shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication.

For information and guidance.

(Sgd.) LORNA O. FAJARDO
Acting President & CEO

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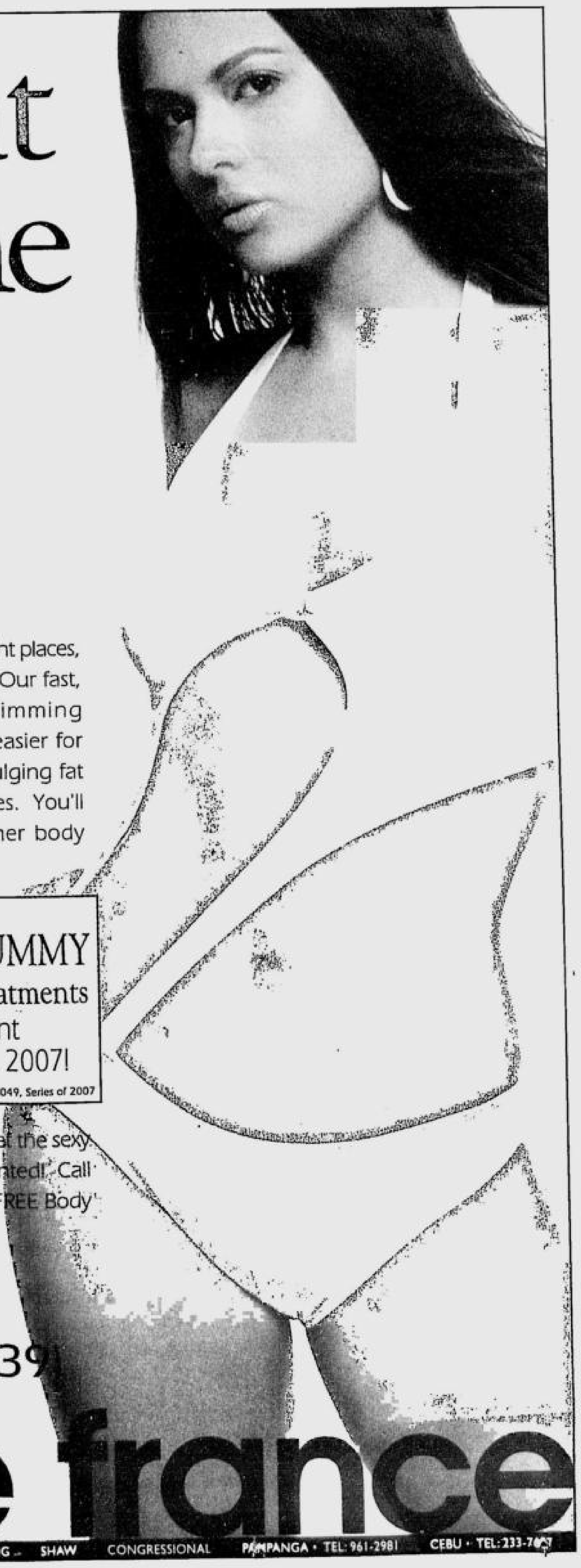

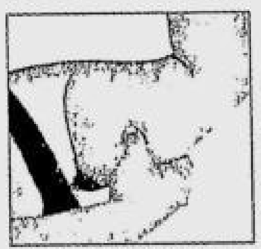
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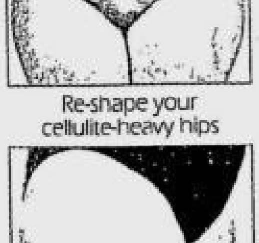
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DENR to probe tribe's complaint vs mining firm

ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY LITO Atienza said yesterday he would look into the complaints against an Australian mining company in Siocon, Zamboanga de Norte, that tribal folk brought to the attention of the United Nations.

However, he said he would not stop operations of the government-backed gold mine.

"We must understand their complaints as we must address them, and effectively correct the possible damage or injustices that have been committed," he told reporters.

But he added that "It should not deter the nation from gaining from what our natural wealth [can contribute] to the economy."

Earlier this month, Three indigenous Subanon organizations sought the intervention of the UN Committee on Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (UN CERD) to stop the mine's encroachment on their ancestral domain.

They also complained of harassment by paramilitary forces trained by the military and employed by the Australian mining company.

They urged the world body to appeal to the Philippine government to adhere to its obligation under the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), which it ratified in 1967. *TJ Burgonio*

Corrections

IN THE AUG. 26 ISSUE, a front-page story—"No cut in US military aid"—misstated the position that Texas Rep. Silvestre Reyes holds in the armed forces committee of the US House of Representatives. Reyes is a member—not the chair—of the committee. Missouri Rep. Ike Skelton is the committee chair.

* * *

IN THE AUG. 27 ISSUE, a story on Page A23—"Another suspect in 7-year-old's kidnap-slay falls"—misstated twice the date when Geraldine Palma's body was found. The body of the 7-year-old victim was found on Aug. 16—not on Aug. 17 or April 17.

* * *

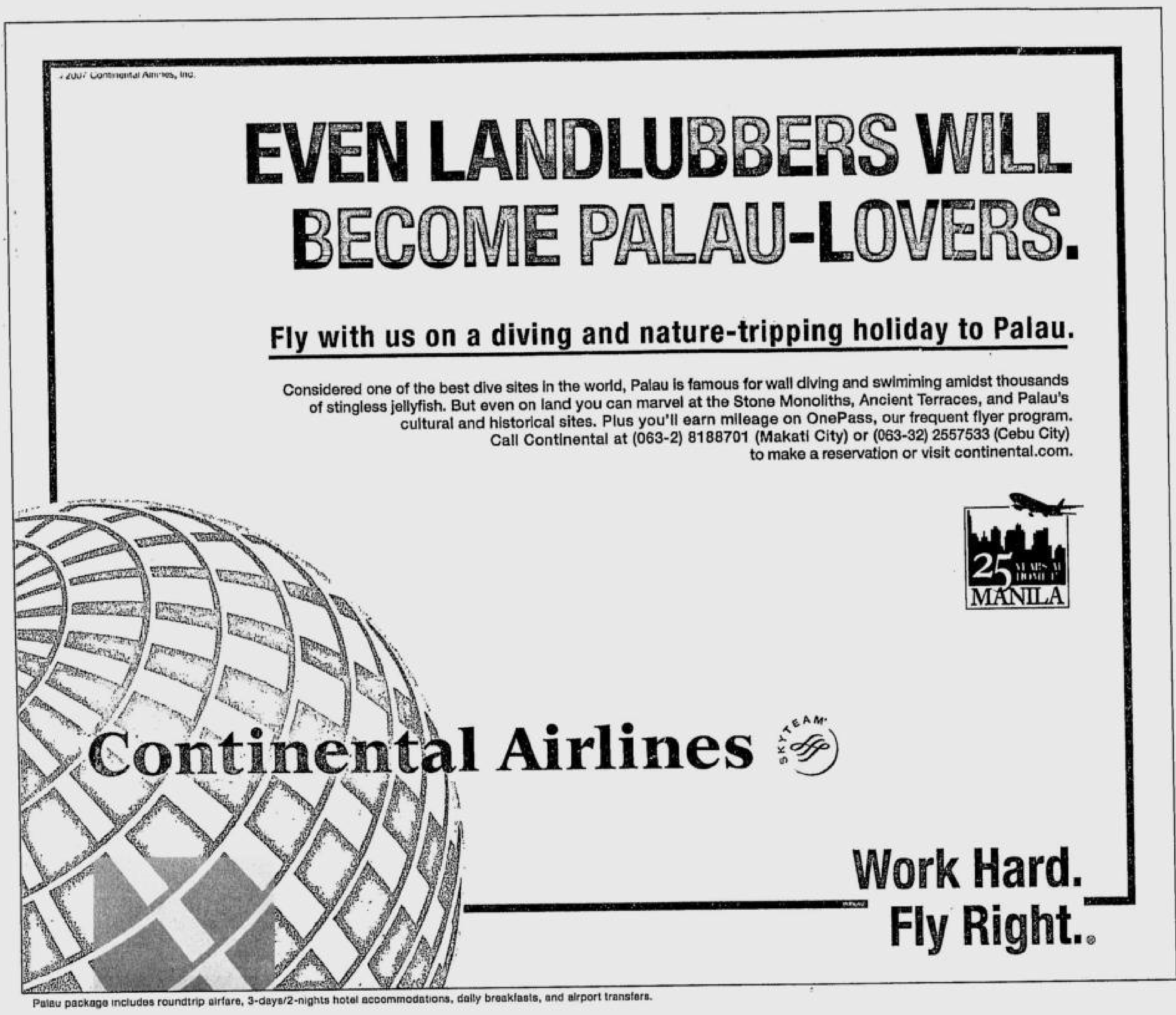
IN THE SAME ISSUE, a front-page story—"48% pass nursing exam"—misstated the name of one of the schools that got a 97-percent passing rate. It is St. Paul University Manila—not Saint Paul College Manila.

* * *

IN THE AUG. 28 ISSUE, a story on Page A2—"Gov't can use $400-M China loan any which way"—misstated the cost of the National Broadband Network (NBN) project and the amount of the credit line extended by China to the Philippines. The NBN project is estimated to cost $330 million—not P330 million—and the credit line extended by China to the Philippines amounts to $1.8 billion—not P1.8 billion.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, a front-page story carried the erroneous headline—"Love never too late for 2 who met in 1945." Lucia Arcolas and Alfredo Mirabuena met in 1942—not 1945.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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

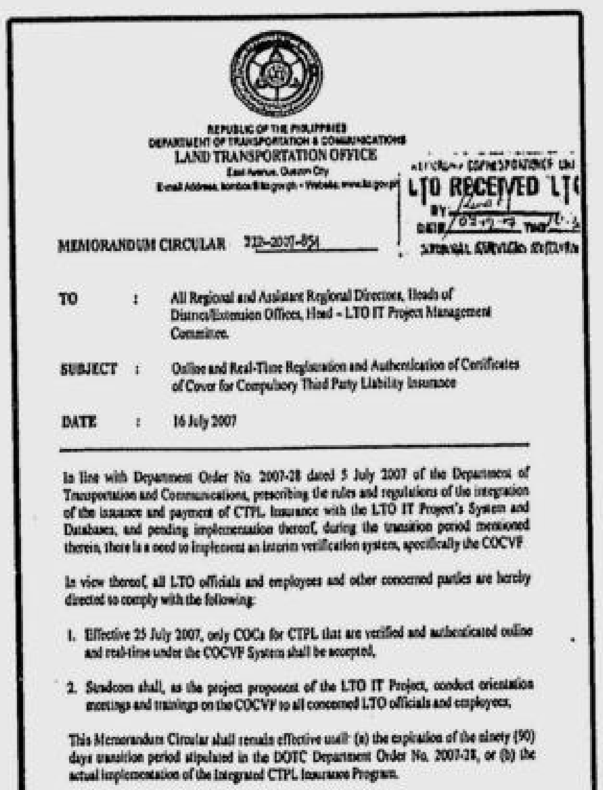
BY STRADCOM CORPORATION

Pursuant to LTO Memorandum Circular Number RIB-2007-854, dated July 16, 2007, we announce that as of the date herein, only the following Compulsory Third Party Liability (CTPL) Insurance Providers are duly interconnected with the Certificate of Cover Verification Facility (COCVF) of the LTO IT Project's System.

The Motoring Public is hereby advised that **ONLY** CTPL-COC Policies issued by these Insurance Providers connected to the COCVF will be accepted and processed at all LTO sites nationwide for motor vehicle registrations.

The Insurance Providers duly interconnected to the COCVF are:
(Partial List as of August 28, 2007)

Asia Insurance (Phils) Corporation
Asia United Insurance, Inc.
Bankers Assurance Corp
BPI/MS Insurance Corporation
Cibeles Insurance Corporation
Country Bankers Insurance Corporation
Empire Insurance Company
Equitable Insurance Corporation
First Nationwide Assurance Corporation
Generali Pilipinas Insurance Company, Inc.
Government Service Insurance System
Investors Assurance Corporation
MAA General Assurance Phils., Inc.
Malayan Insurance Company, Inc.
Manila Surety & Fidelity Company, Inc.
Mapfre Insular Insurance Corp.
Meridian Assurance Corporation
Metropolitan Insurance Company, Inc.
Phil. General Insurance Corporation
Philippine First Insurance Company, Inc.
Pioneer Insurance & Surety Corporation
Prudential Guarantee and Assurance, Inc.
Seaboard-Eastern Insurance Company, Inc.
Sterling Insurance Company, Inc.
Tokio Marine Malayan Insurance Company, Inc.
UCPB General Insurance Company, Inc./PAMI



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS
LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE
East Avenue, Quezon City

LTO RECEIVED

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR RIB-2007-854

TO : All Regional and Assistant Regional Directors, Heads of District/Extension Offices, Head – LTO IT Project Management Committee.

SUBJECT : Online and Real-Time Registration and Authentication of Certificates of Cover for Compulsory Third Party Liability Insurance

DATE : 16 July 2007

In line with Department Order No. 2007-28 dated 5 July 2007 of the Department of Transportation and Communications, prescribing the rules and regulations of the integration of the issuance and payment of CTPL Insurance with the LTO IT Project's System and Databases, and pending implementation thereof, during the transition period mentioned therein, there is a need to implement an interim verification system, specifically the COCVF.

In view thereof, all LTO officials and employees and other concerned parties are hereby directed to comply with the following:

1. Effective 25 July 2007, only COCs for CTPL that are verified and authenticated online and real-time under the COCVF System shall be accepted;
2. Stradcom shall, as the project proponent of the LTO IT Project, conduct orientation meetings and trainings on the COCVF to all concerned LTO officials and employees.

This Memorandum Circular shall remain effective until (a) the expiration of the ninety (90) days transition period stipulated in the DOTC Department Order No. 2007-28, or (b) the actual implementation of the Integrated CTPL Insurance Program.

For strict compliance. [redacted]

REYNALDO I. BERROYA
Assistant Secretary

CERTIFIED COPY
Records Officer II

As soon as more Insurance Providers duly interconnect with the COCVF, the above-specified list will be updated and published or posted at all Land Transportation Office sites nationwide.

***Insurance Providers may contact Ms. RHODA B. IPAC at 0918-9221655 or Ms. JENNIFER BALLADA-BUNCALAN at 0920-9041604 for your contractual, documentary and other requirements.

Tax credit scam witness laments slow justice

By Michelle V. Remo

THE MAIN WITNESS TO THE MULTIBILlion-peso tax credit scam has asked Finance Secretary Margarito Teves to help speed up the resolution of the case that has dragged on for more than a decade.

"Unfortunately, it appears that government efforts to recover the lost revenues in the tax credit fraud and punish its author cannot take off, for one reason or another," said the lawyer of witness Felix Chingkoe in an Aug. 22 letter to Teves.

Felix Chingkoe is the brother of Faustino Chingkoe, the main suspect in the tax credit fraud perpetrated in the 1990s that resulted in the government losing more than P5 billion worth of revenues.

Lawyer Jose Isagani Gonzales told Teves that Felix Chingkoe had similarly written to Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez last year to no avail.

Felix Chingkoe said he wanted the cases resolved for the sake of his family whose security has been under threat since he made the decision to become a government main witness in the case against his brother.

Charges against Faustino in connection with the tax credit scam have been pending with the Office of the Ombudsman since 2003. Until now, however, no extradition or forfeiture cases have been filed.

Faustino Chingkoe, and his wife Gloria, are reported to be living in Canada where they reportedly own millions of dollars worth of real estate.

The couple are major suspects in the tax credit scam of the mid-1990s, in which some 64 companies owned by the couple obtained through fraudulent means tax credit certificates worth abut P5.3 billion and sold these to other companies which used them to pay for their tax obligations.

When the TCCs were later found to be fraudulent, it led to large revenue losses.

Tax credits are refund payments that certain export companies are allowed to claim for duties paid on imported materials used for the manufacture of products for export. Instead of a cash refund, the government issues certificates, the TCCs, which companies can use to settle tax obligations. The companies are also allowed to sell the TCCs to other companies.

Faustino and Gloria are said to be the owners of the garments-manufacturing firms that sold fake TCCs to giant oil firms Petron Corp. and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., which used the TCCs to pay their tax obligations.

After the Court of Tax Appeals invalidated their tax payments because of the use of fraudulent TCCs, Petron and Shell were ordered to each pay close to P600 million in taxes to the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

The firms owned by Faustino Chingkoe tagged in the tax credit scam include Diamond Knitting, Filstar Textile Industrial, New Alliance Thread Co., Fiber Tech Corp., Jantex Philippines, Express and Master Colour System and Allstar System.

Felix used to be involved in the operation of these family owned companies but decided to serve as government witness, saying his brother had used the firms to engage in the scam.

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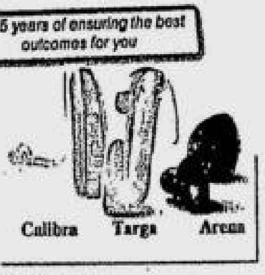

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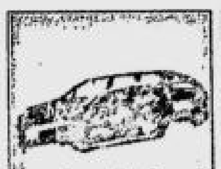

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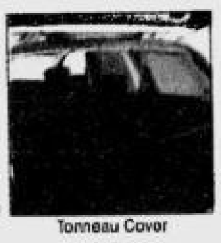

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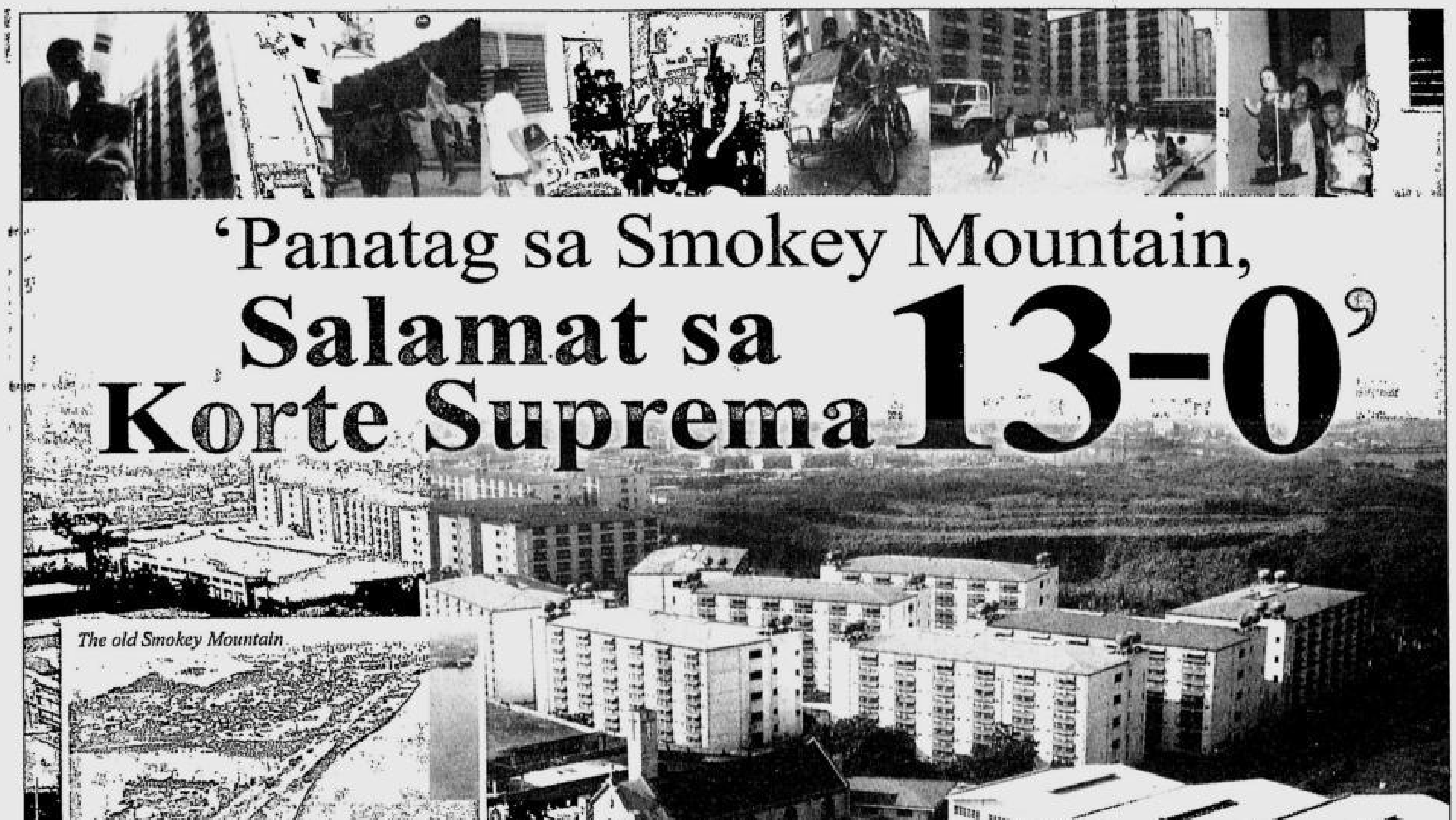
'Panatag sa Smokey Mountain, Salamat sa Korte Suprema 13-0'



The old Smokey Mountain

Kagaoun – Calo

Older residents of Smokey Mountain still remember when their community used to be called Barrio Mandaragat (Fishermen's Community). Its residents could catch fish using bancas along the nearby river of Navotas. The other name of the area was Quonset, because it still had the Quonset huts left by the Americans after World-War II.

In the early 80's, Metro Manila garbage started being dumped onto the shorelines of Manila Bay and heaps of garbage began to encroach into this fishing village all the way to the boundary of Navotas. Eventually, it began to take motor boats plying farther away from this Tondo community for fish to be caught, and the residents of Barrio Mandaragat had to resort to scavenging to survive.

Angelito Ferreras, 43, father of 8 children, sold his simple boat in the 90's. There was nothing anymore to fish where he used to catch fish and shrimps. His father and his grandfather had lived in this Tondo area since the liberation from the Japanese occupation. He grew up seeing the river as a source of food and livelihood.

In 1983, with the area already turned a dumpsite, the government demolished the squatter homes and relocated residents to Bulihan, Silang, Cavite. However, all that was there waiting in Bulihan was a comfort room cubicle. There was no livelihood, he recalls. Many of them eventually returned to Smokey Mountain, where there was income from scavenging.

In the years leading to 1986, the world's media put its focus on Smokey Mountain. First-World nations found unbelievable a community of people actually living amidst, and making a living out of, the mountain range-like methane-emitting mounds of garbage. That community became to the world a symbol of Philippine poverty.

'Feeling Rich'

Life got better for the Smokey Mountain shanty-dwellers when they were granted humane concrete housing under the **Smokey Mountain Reclamation and Development Project (SMRDP)**, a joint project of the **National Housing Authority (NHA)** and **R-II Builders, Inc.**

The men of Smokey Mountain used to lie on the G.I. sheets of their shanty roofs to keep typhoon winds from blowing off their makeshift dwelling. Worms as large as their fingers crawled out amidst the rising waters brought by rains. Now the Smokey Mountain families enjoy showers and bedroom lofts and have concrete buildings to live in. Today, they are no longer bothered by strong rains or floods or worms.

Since their transfer to the housing units, the Smokey Mountain residents have reclassified their status. *"Feeling mayaman na kami dito* (We feel rich here)," says Nenita Santiago, 46, mother of 5. Imagine mo, may comfort room kami! And so they have renamed their community *"Paradise Heights Condominiums."*

"Mapapanatag na kami sa Paradise Heights."

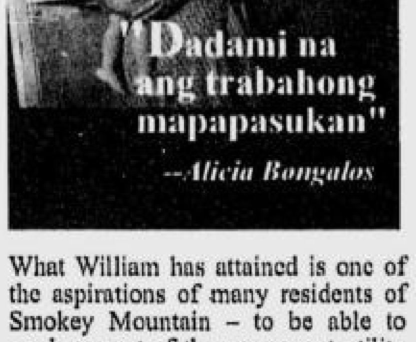
--*May Cabales*

Employment for Smokey Mountain Residents

Building leaders, however, estimate that many male residents are still making their livelihood from scavenging in other dumpsites, while the other men are drivers of sidecars and jeepneys. Most female residents do not have work except to take care of their children, while the other women do part-time vending.

Some Smokey Mountain residents, however, have been fortunate enough to be hired by locators of the adjacent Manila Harbour Center which was set up on the reclaimed land that was part of the SMRDP.

William Morallos, 53, father of 5 and grandfather of 3, one day trooped to greet an official of R-II Builders on his birthday and asked him for a job. William's wish was granted and within a week this fish vendor began a new life as a utility man with the sister company of R-II Builders. He used to be skinny but now he is a picture of health and contentment. He used to resort to loan sharks to capitalize his fish vending enterprise, but now he is assured of income without need to borrow money.



"Dadami na ang trabahong mapapasukan"

--*Alicia Bongalos*

What William has attained is one of the aspirations of many residents of Smokey Mountain – to be able to work as part of the permanent utility or maintenance crew of locators of the nearby Manila Harbour Centre. As it is with scavenging, vending, and sidecar driving, the earners of the families usually get to bring home only between Php 70 to Php160 pesos a day.

Nenita affirms that most men there really hope to land jobs with locators at the Manila Harbour Centre, which, she adds, is not only near them but also provides stable employment. She deplores however that when detractors of the project, including former Solicitor General Francisco Chavez, started filing cases against the project, the business locators have stopped coming.

Supreme Court and Faith in the Future

The August 15 Supreme Court decision gave them renewed confidence in the future. Penned by Justice Presbitero J. Velasco Jr., the Supreme Court decision upheld the validity of the Smokey Mountain project, which was given full support by two Philippine presidents, former President Cory Aquino and former President Fidel Ramos.

Nenita expresses, *"Malaki talaga ang pasasalamat namin sa Supreme Court. Panatag na kami sa katayuan namin ngayon.* (We express our profound thanks to the Supreme. Now we are secure of our state.)

"Sana hayaan na lang kaming mamuhay ng tahimik at yung mga naninira, isaalang-alang din kaming mga wala. (We pray that we be left alone by those who want to bring the project down and that they consider the plight of us who have none,") she adds.

"Mas mabilis na ang daloy ng tulong sa mahihirap."

-- *Fr. Ben Beltran, SVD*

"Natatakot kami, dahil kapag na-void ni Chavez ang Smokey Mountain development, balik kami sa bundok (We were afraid, because if Chavez managed to void the Smokey Mountain development, we would be back to the mountains)," says Nenita, who is a convener of the Smokey Mountain Alliance of Concerned Beneficiaries, the people's organization in Smokey Mountain that joined the fight for the validity of the low-cost concrete housing development to Congress, and to the Supreme Court.

Evident now is the need not for more opposition but better livelihood. They believe with the High Court decisions comes more stable assistance like microfinance and job placements.

"Umaraw, bumagyo, bumaha, wala kaming problema dito. Bayaran na lang ang problema namin (Come sunshine, or storm, or flood, we have no problem here. Our only worry is how to pay for our units.)," quips Amelia Crisostomo, 54, widow, mother of 6, grandmother of 12, and site resident of Barrio Mandaragat since 1964. NHA subsidizes 75% of the cost of each unit, while a representative of each Smokey Mountain family amortizes the remaining 25%.

Mountains of Dreams and Hopes

Leonora Casanova, 41, mother of 7, and six-months pregnant with her 8th child, has been counting on the sidecar driving of her husband and her two eldest sons for family sustenance. When there aren't any classes or when it is raining hard, their combined income is low.

Leonora's family used to live in Navotas but transferred in 1991 to Smokey where rent in the shanties then was just 60 pesos a month. When her husband could not anymore find new contractual work by 1996, he turned to scavenging. *"Pangarap ko makapagtrabaho ang mga anak ko* (I wish that my children could find work)," Leonora sighs. In Smokey Mountain, when the residents say that they wish for work, they mean "permanent, salaried work."

At 39 and still girlish-looking, May Cabale is already going to be a grandmother this year. Married at 16, this mother of 4 used to be a domestic helper in Quezon City. She married her neighbor's brother, who was living in Smokey Mountain. He was an air-con repairman and now does casual work as a driver. Her eldest is 22 and is following his father's footsteps as an air-con repairman. Her dream is simple. *"Pangarap kong makatapos kami ng pagbayad* (I hope that we can finish our amortization)," says May.

Alicia Bongalos, 50, mother of 6, and grandmother of 3, had lived right on the top center of the mound of garbage. There were 12 shanties on that mound's top, housing 12 families who had come from Cavite and who used to sleep right outside Pier 10 and Pier 12, where the husbands were stevedores. In 1984, when the Philippine Ports Authority demolished their makeshift sleeping areas, the husbands found a place on which to build huts – that was the mound at the foreground of Smokey Mountain.

"Dati uod, bangaw at langaw sa pagkain ang lagi naming kasama (Before, we always had worms, and giant flies and flies always hovered over our food)," Alicia recalls. Now she and her family are living dignified in what has become a paradise to this dumpsite community.

Three of Alicia's children reached second-year college and one is a first-year college scholar of Smokey Mountain's beloved parish priest, Fr. Ben Beltran, SVD, who has been working among the residents of Smokey Mountain since 1978. Alicia's wish for her husband, a casual stevedore of Pier 10, to undergo skills training to help him get better pay.

Merly Almario, 50, widow, mother of 2, and grandmother of 4, did not have to rent in Smokey Mountain. Her husband was born in the former fishing community in 1955. In 1977, her mother-in-law built a house for them by the riverbank. But the landscape at her first home changed. She joined Fr. Ben's fight for the development of Smokey Mountain. Now she is seeing the fruits of her, Fr. Ben's and many other residents', hard work and faith to see a revived community living no longer in squalor and filth but in dignity and hope.

Unleashed Opportunities

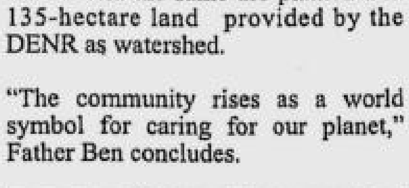
Father Ben is a busy man. With a spirit that sees no block amid difficulties, his brown skin only serves as cover for a man of steel in convictions and of gentleness in demeanor.

But Father Ben, these days, is a busier man. The Supreme Court decision, to him, has unleashed opportunities for Smokey Mountain. *"More doors for help have opened. Ang daming tulong na dumadaloy,"* he states, as he plugs his parish website address www.prcsmokey--mt.org which provides an update of the church-initiated assistance projects.

The letters "prc" in the address stand for Parish of the Resurrected Christ. The image of the Risen Lord comes like a perfect symbol for the community that rises from its grave after an experience of Calvary. "We are building here the world's first green church – the Church of Hope." Being built out of recycled materials and to be provided environment-friendly features, the Church of Hope edifice will also house a variety of high-tech enterprises that all together make a "Silicon Mountain" out of a "digitized" community. Hundreds of poor youths are now trained in computer skills and e-trading using computers obtained from the Taiwanese government.

Father Ben sees the world judging this Filipino community by the fruits that it bears. "Our youth are trooping to the Marikina watershed to plant trees in behalf of donors. We channel back their energies to Mother Earth." On a one-hectare lot donated by the NHA for livelihood, a seedling bank is being grown. The seedlings are sold to donors and the same are planted at a 135-hectare land provided by the DENR as watershed.

"The community rises as a world symbol for caring for our planet," Father Ben concludes.



"Makikita pa lalo ang magandang bunga ng aming laban."

-- *Merly Almario*

ADVERTORIAL

SC affirms validity of book deal

THE SUPREME COURT HAS UPHELD ITS ruling affirming the validity of the award of the World Bank-funded textbook contract to two publishing houses.

Lawyers of losing bidder Kolonwel Trading promptly warned that the decision could lead to graft, saying that unscrupulous public officials could use it to circumvent the provisions of the Government Procurement Reform Act.

In a July 24 resolution released last week, the high court denied with finality Kolonwel's motion for reconsideration, saying it had raised no substantial arguments to warrant the reversal of the high court's original decision.

Last June, the high court overturned a lower court decision and affirmed the government's award of a $40 million World Bank-funded textbook project to the Vibal Publishing House and the Watana Phanit Printing and Publishing Co.

It rejected Kolonwel's petition protesting its disqualification from the bidding process for failing to follow proper procedures.

Kolonwel's lawyers, Harry Roque and Joel Butuyan, said the high court, in saying that the rules of the foreign lending institution should prevail over local laws in procurements for projects financed by foreign loan agreements, would open the floodgates for corruption.

They said unscrupulous public officials would capitalize on the exemption of these projects from the mandatory provisions of the Government Procurement Reform Act, such as the absolute prohibition on conflicts of interest, transparency in bidding procedures, and good governance.

Allowing the implementation of the bidding rules of the foreign lending institutions also "abdicates Philippine sovereignty" for projects which will eventually be paid for by Filipino taxpayers, the lawyers said.

In 2005, the Inter-Agency Bids and Awards Committee recommended to the World Bank that three lots of textbook contracts for the supply of social studies textbooks be awarded to Vibal, Watana and Daewoo.

Leila B. Salaverria

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, August 29, 2007
Beheading of John the Baptist

1st Reading:	**Jer 1:17-19**
Gospel:	**Mark 6:17-29**

Herod had ordered John to be arrested and had him bound and put in prison because of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip. Herod had married her and John had told him, "It is not right for you to live with your brother's wife." So Herodias held a grudge against John and wanted to kill him, but she could not because Herod respected John. He knew John to be an upright and holy man and kept him safe. And he liked listening to him, although he became very disturbed whenever he heard him.

Herodias had her chance on Herod's birthday, when he gave a dinner for all the senior government officials, military chiefs and the leaders of Galilee. On that occasion the daughter of Herodias came in and danced; and she delighted Herod and his guests. The king said to the girl, "Ask me for anything you want and I will give it to you." And he went so far as to say with many oaths, "I will give you anything you ask, even half my kingdom." She went out to consult her mother, "What shall I ask for?" The mother replied, "The head of John the Baptist." The girl hurried to the king and made her request: "I want you to give me the head of John the Baptist, here and now, on a dish."

The king was very displeased, but he would not refuse in front of his guests because of his oaths. So he sent one of the bodyguards with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded John in prison; then he brought the head on a dish and gave it to the girl. And the girl gave it to her mother. When John's disciples heard of this, they came and took his body and buried it.

Commentary

The prophet John is a fortified city, a pillar of iron, a wall of brass against the whole land. He calls everyone back, standing up to the kings and priests and people. He was warned that they will fight against him—and they did. He was murdered. But God was with him always to deliver him in spite of death. John was faithful, calling the people to a baptism of repentance that led to the forgiveness of sins. Many of the people came to him and turned from their lives of sin and injustice. But it was the religious, economic and political leadership that resisted him. And since he was a prophet he went after King Herod who had murdered his brother so that he could have his wife (she was definitely part of the murder and the marriage). He was imprisoned but Herod is afraid of the people and won't kill him. But in reality, he was more afraid of his new wife and of looking bad at a dinner party. And so he has John beheaded in a prison on the spur of a moment. He is the last and greatest prophet of the older testament who depended on God as his rock and prepared the way for Jesus. Do we stand up and tell people all that the Lord commands us?

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Housing fair for cops, other DILG men opens

By Cynthia D. Balana

SOME 30,000 FORECLOSED AND ACquired properties of the government were opened yesterday to more than 22,000 policemen and other personnel of the Department of Interior and Local Government during the "DILG Family Housing Fair" in Camp Crame, Quezon City.

Vice President Noli de Castro, chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council and Interior and Local Government Secretary Ronaldo Puno led the opening of the fair.

Also covered by the fair are the attached agencies of the DILG such as the Philippine National Police, Bureau of Fire Protection, Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, National Police Commission, and Philippine Public Safety College.

The three-day fair, which will run until Aug. 30 , will offer financing not only of the key shelter agencies—Pag-Ibig Fund, National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation, and Home Guaranty Corporation—but also selected government financial institutions, including Social Security System, Government Service Insurance System, and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

The properties for sale are located in Metro Manila, Bulacan, Cavite, Rizal, and Laguna.

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KUMON

Activists, kin take to streets tomorrow to remember 'desaparecidos'

ACTIVISTS AND FAMILIES OF victims of enforced disappearances will stage protest rallies and hold a concert in Metro Manila to mark the International Day of the Disappeared tomorrow.

Human rights and militant groups will march from the University of Santos Tomas on España Boulevard to Plaza Miranda in Quiapo, Manila, to highlight the unsolved cases of disappearances.

"The responsibility for the almost 200 cases of enforced disappearances in the Philippines lies squarely with the Arroyo administration," Bayan Muna secretary general Renato Reyes said in a statement.

Tribute concert

Families of missing persons, including agriculturist Jonas Burgos, students Karen Empeño and Sherlyn Cadapan, Panay activists Luisa Dominado and Nilo Arado, are expected to join the rally.

Later in the day, the Asian Federation against Involuntary Disappearances (AFAD), Claimants 1081, HIVOS-The Netherlands and the Embassy of France will hold a tribute concert for all the disappeared people around the world.

The 6 p.m. concert at the UP Film Institute, dubbed "Presente!", coincides with similar concerts in six other countries in Asia and 18 countries in Latin America.

Through the concert, AFAD hopes to bring people together to raise more awareness about disappearances and the UN Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

From 1985 to 2006, there were 1,988 reported cases of enforced disappearances, including 1,740 documented cases, according to AFAD. *TJ Burgonio*

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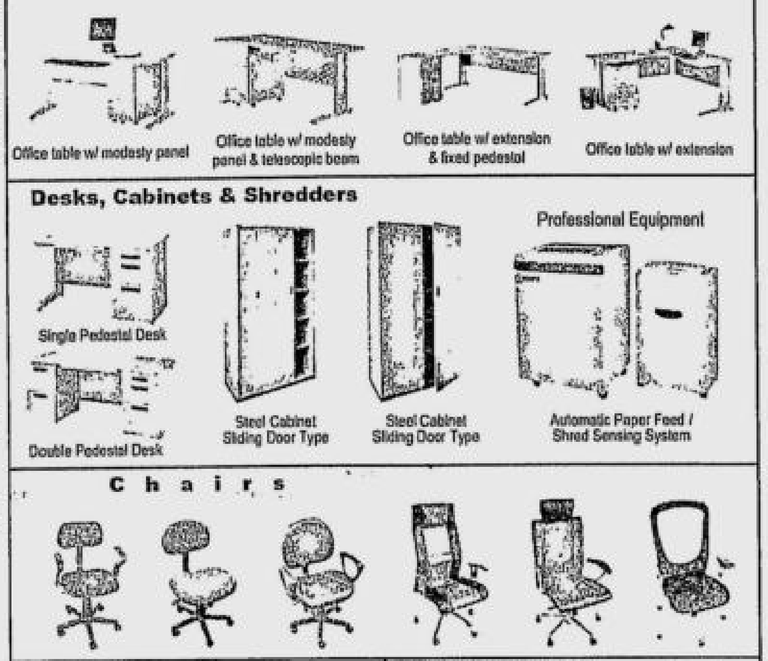

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131 solons file historic bill vs government

From page A1

Crossing party lines, the 131 lawmakers sought the maximum penalty of reclusion perpetua—life imprisonment—for anyone who would be found guilty of violating the "Act Defining and Penalizing the Crime of Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance."

Ocampo and five other militant lawmakers yesterday said the bill should face no grave difficulty in the House, considering the overwhelming support it had received on paper.

The House bill was ratified last year, but the Senate failed to pass its version, according to Ocampo.

"Since the majority of the members in the House are already coauthors, we can expedite the process and push the bill in the plenary," Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño said in a press conference.

Casiño said the proposed measure would help the cause of Burgos—son of the late publisher and press freedom icon Jose "Joe" Burgos—and Karen Empeño and Sherlyn Cadapan, the two UP students allegedly abducted by the military more than a year ago.

Brothers Raymond and Reynaldo Manalo, who reportedly escaped from military detention two weeks ago, have said they had seen the UP students at Camp Tecson in Limay, Bataan.

74 cases in '06

Empeño and Cadapan were still alive at that time, according to the two farmers.

Speaking in the same press conference, Gabriela Rep. Liza Maza urged Congress to do its part in putting a stop to the growing problem of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances.

Since President Macapagal-Arroyo assumed office in 2001, at least 183 cases of involuntary disappearances had been recorded, according to Ocampo.

His group recorded the highest number of cases at 74 in 2006. In the first quarter of this year alone, he said there were already 22 victims of enforced disappearances.

Noting that the Supreme Court was already drafting the writ of amparo (protection), Maza said "Congress should also show political will to address the problem by ratifying the bill."

The writ of amparo has been hailed by human rights groups as a proactive position by the high tribunal. It aims to keep law enforcers from hiding behind the cloak of denial in the face of petitions for a writ of habeas corpus.

International convention

Ocampo said HB 2263 was in line with the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

Signed on Dec. 20, 2006, the convention defines enforced disappearance as "the arrest, detention, abduction or any other form of deprivation of liberty by agents of the State or by persons or groups of persons acting with the authorization, support or acquiescence of the State, followed by a refusal to acknowledge the deprivation of liberty or by concealment of the fate or whereabouts of the disappeared person, which place such a person outside the protection of the law."

"The phenomenon of enforced or involuntary disappearance has largely been left undefined, unchecked and unpunished in our country," Ocampo wrote in the bill's explanatory note.

"No specific offense related to enforced or involuntary disappearance has been recognized despite its systematic occurrence for the past 30 years."

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Now, PNP pins Jonas kidnap …

From page A1

and accused the PNP of colluding with the Armed Forces of the Philippines in an attempt to cover up the alleged military participation in the April 28 abduction of her 36-year-old son.

"This is not funny any more," Edita Burgos said. "Before, it was only the Armed Forces. Now even police are allowing themselves to be used in the cover-up."

Emerito Lipio alias Ka Tibo, Marlon Manuel alias Ka Carlo and Melissa Concepcion Reyes alias Ka Liza were presented to the media by Edgardo Doromal, chief of the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG).

All three were members of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), according to Doromal.

Lipio was arrested for robbery and extortion by police in Bulucan on Aug. 20, Doromal said. Lipio reportedly provided clues that led police a few days later to Manuel and Reyes.

The PNP said Lipio was out on bail on robbery and extortion charges.

Manuel and Reyes were "invited for questioning" and volunteered information about Burgos, said Doromal. He said the three communist rebels were under the government's witness protection program.

Lipio said Burgos, son of the late publisher and press freedom icon Jose "Joe" Burgos, was a member of the CPP's Bulacan Party Committee and was its political and intelligence officer. He was known in the movement as Ka Ramon, according to Lipio.

Burgos followed

Sometime in April, Lipio said, he and Manuel were ordered by their superior, identified as Delfin de Guzman alias Ka Baste, to shadow Burgos on suspicion that he was pilfering funds from the movement and serving as an agent of the military. He said he had known Burgos since 2005.

Lipio, who said he became a CPP member in 2004, said that on April 28, the day Burgos was abducted, he was following Burgos at the Ever Gotesco mall in Fairview, Quezon City, and saw him being forcibly taken by four men.

He said that he recognized two of the four men who shoved Burgos inside a waiting Toyota Revo. He identified the two as a certain Dante and Enso, both members of the CPP-NPA Rebolusyonaryong Yunit Guerilla.

Reyes said she was to meet Burgos and a certain Ka Jo at the mall on the day Burgos disappeared to discuss the possibility of meeting with a contact in the military. When Burgos failed to appear, Reyes said Ka Jo told her to leave and await further instructions.

Credible enough

"We believe they are credible enough," Doromal said of the three. We checked with the IG (the PNP's Intelligence Group) and verified that they are members of the NPA," Doromal said.

The three communist rebels were presented to the Department of Justice yesterday in connection with the filing of abduction charges against the two members of the NPA who allegedly abducted Burgos.

"Based on the evidence, we believe we have a strong case (against the NPA members)," Doromal said.

Doromal also said the PNP had yet to establish if the abduction of Burgos was part of a purge within the communist movement. "That is what they (CPP) do in cases like this. That is their doctrine," he said.

PNP Senior Supt. Joel Coronel said the PNP was investigating the "collusion" of the CPP and some rogue elements in the military in the disappearance of Burgos. He did not elaborate.

Isafp behind abduction?

Last month, military sources told the INQUIRER that agents of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) were behind the abduction of Burgos. The military has denied involvement in the abduction.

Earlier, a CIDG investigation traced the license plate on one of the vehicles used by Burgos' abductors to an impounded vehicle parked inside the camp of the Army's 56th Infantry Battalion in Norzagaray, Bulacan. Another license plate used in another vehicle was traced to a service vehicle used by retired Army chief Romeo Tolentino.

But Doromal said the investigation did not implicate the military directly in the Burgos abduction.

"That was only the suspicion of his family. In this case, it is clear we already have witnesses," Doromal said. "So we will go with what we have now."

Death as a traitor

Lipio said he decided to talk because he feared for his own life. He said his revelations to police "would mean my death as a traitor."

"Mrs. Burgos, please consider what has really happened (to your son). In 1992, there were already these problems. I don't know if Mrs. Burgos knows what really happened (back then)," Lipio said in Tagalog.

In the early 1990s, the communist movement launched a bloody purge killing hundreds of cadres on suspicion they were agents of the military.

Asked why Lipio and the others are giving the statements only now, Doromal said Lipio had to secure bail from his initial charge of robbery and extortion before he could give the CIDG his statements on the Burgos abduction. *With a report from Christian V. Esguerra*

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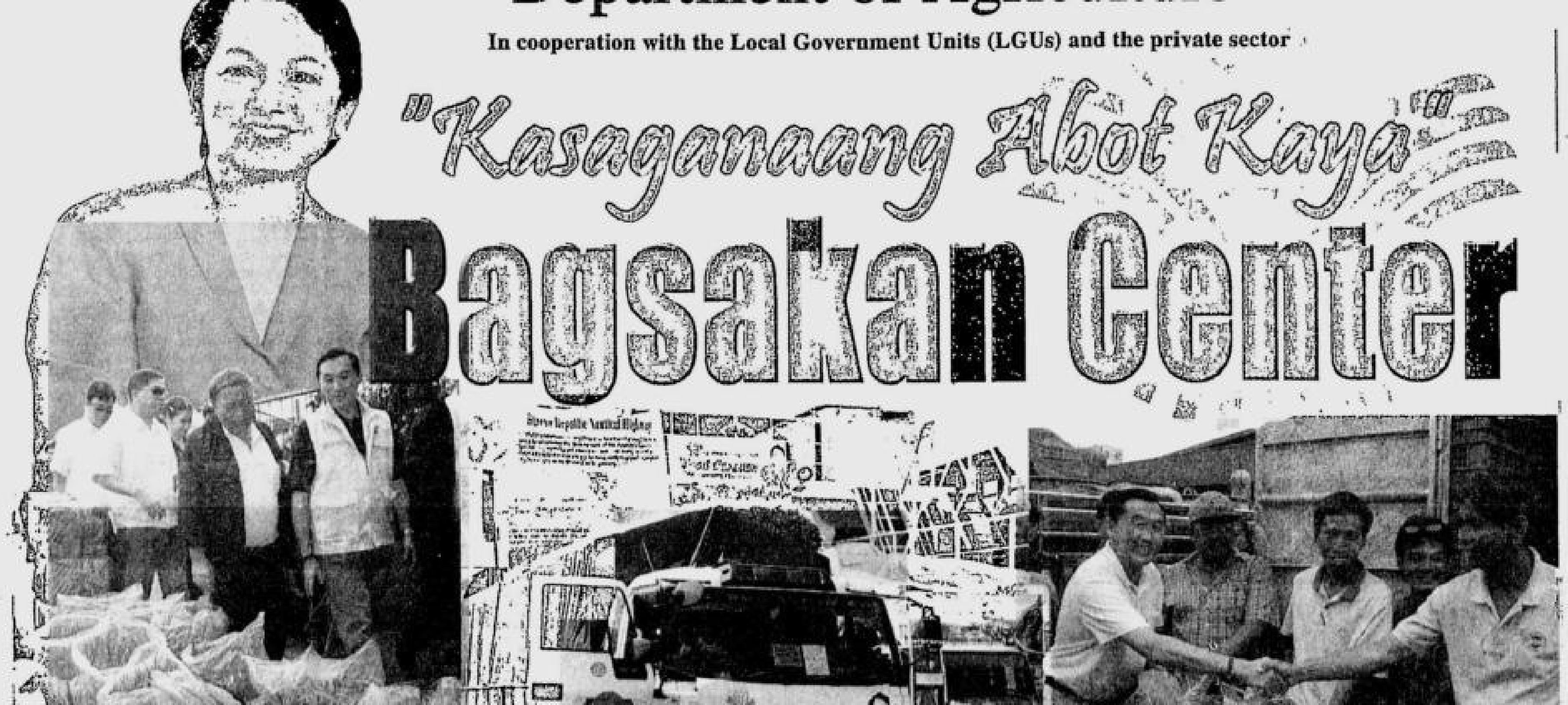

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Brazil to help RP develop ethanol

By Cynthia D. Balana

BRAZIL HAS AGREED TO ASSIST the Philippines in the development and use of the ethanol fuel because of the huge potential of bioethanol production in the country, according to Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo.

Romulo said that Brazilian Minister for Foreign Relations Celso Amorim had agreed to intensify cooperation in energy security, particularly in the development and use of the green energy, between the two countries.

The two foreign ministers met on the sidelines of the third Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation (Fealac) in Brazil.

Brazil has one of the largest biofuel programs in the world, providing 18 percent of the country's automotive fuel that has resulted in its self-sufficiency in terms of its petroleum needs for domestic consumption.

Since it is more affordable, accessible and is easy to manufacture and process, the alternative fuel is steadily becoming a promising alternative to gasoline throughout the world.

In the Philippines, the use of bioethanol and other fuel alternatives will be a major boost to the country's energy independence agenda which outlines the roadmap for the attainment of its energy self-sufficiency by 2010.

It is expected to ensure a steady supply of energy to the Philippines which is currently depending heavily on imported oil.

In January this year, President Macapagal-Arroyo formally signed into law Republic Act No. 9367, also known as the "Biofuels Act of 2006."

The law will promote the use of alternative transport fuels consistent with the Declaration on East Asian Energy Security ratified by the 16 heads of state of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) and its dialogue partners during the 12th Asean Summit in Cebu.

Bioethanol fuel is produced by sugar fermentation process using crops such as corn, maize, wheat crops, sawdust, and sorghum plants.

15 Chinese illegals held

By Jerome Aning

THE BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION HAS DEtained 15 illegal Chinese immigrants rounded up in a series of raids on warehouses in Tondo, Manila, that yielded P100-million worth of smuggled and contraband goods.

The latest arrests bring to 106 the number of illegal or undocumented aliens rounded up in the past two weeks in Manila and Central Luzon.

The raids in Tondo were undertaken on Thursday by the agents of the Presidential Anti-Smuggling Group, formed in June by President Macapagal-Arroyo in response to businessmen's complaints of unfair competition.

Two of the warehouses, located in a compound owned by the RAN Property and Management Corp., at the corner of Antonio Rivera and Bambang Streets, reportedly contained smuggled chemicals, agricultural products, electronic items, toys, digital video disc players, slippers, read-to-wear clothes, towels, blankets and hardware. Also seized were food items not covered by any clearance from the Bureau of Food and Drugs.

Alcober; 82

NIEVES "NANAY Bebing" Celmar Alcober, grandmother of Dennis Gadil of Malaya, died on Monday at the age of 82. Her body lies at the Funeraria Filipinas, Real Street, Zapote-Alabang Road, Pamplona, Las Piñas City. Interment to be announced later.

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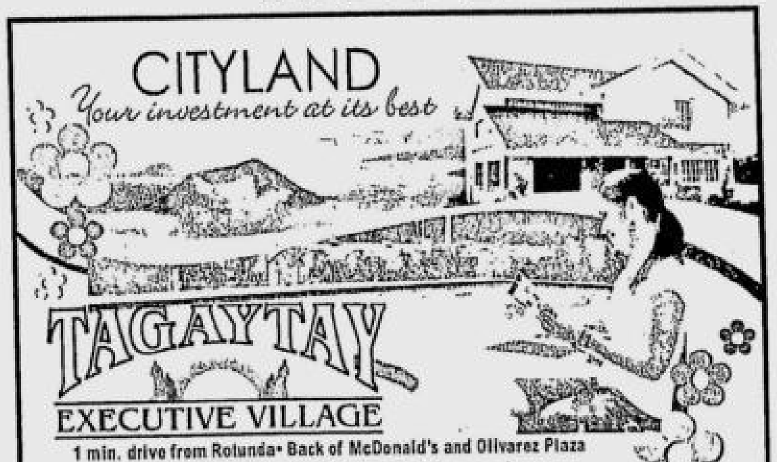

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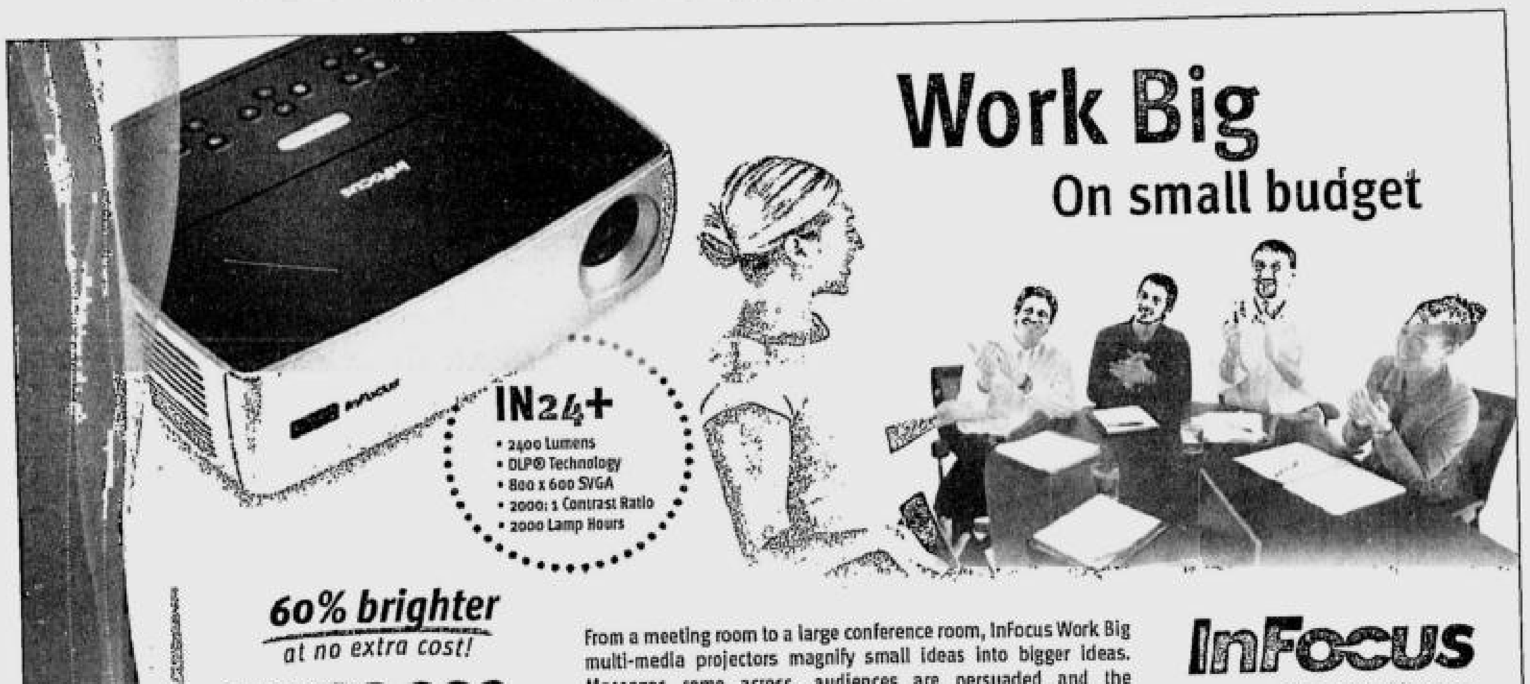

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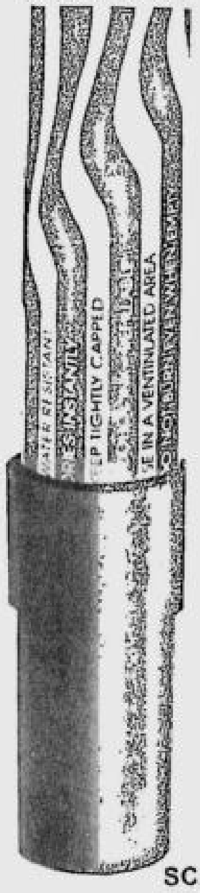

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Joma Sison arrested; GMA says it's giant step to

From page A1

Front of the Philippines, which has been involved in off-and-on peace negotiations for many years with the government.

Presidential Management Staff head Cerge Remonde confirmed Sison's arrest was discussed during the NSC meeting.

A Cabinet member, who asked not to be identified due to the sensitivity of the matter, said Ms Arroyo was elated upon hearing the news and promptly "congratulated" National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales for the feat.

Sison, 68, will be on trial in the Netherlands, not the Philippines, spokesperson Wim de Bruin said of the Public Prosecutor's Office.

"There is no extradition request," De Bruin said. "These are crimes that were committed in the Netherlands. Ordering murders is a crime according to Dutch law."

Kintanar was gunned down in a Japanese restaurant in Quezon City on Jan. 23, 2003.

Tabara and his son-in-law, Stephen Ong, were shot dead in a parking lot, also in Quezon City, as they got out of their car on Sept. 26, 2004.

The Communist Party of the Philippines' armed wing, the New People's Army, had claimed responsibility for the slayings.

Computers, CDs seized

In Utrecht, teams of police raided Sison's office, seizing computers, CDs, documents and books, said Aldo Gonzalez, who said he was questioned during the six-hour police operation at the office.

Gonzalez, who said he was a staff member of the NDF's negotiating team, dismissed the well-known allegations against Sison for the murders.

"They are all fabricated charges," Gonzalez said.

Prosecutors said at least seven other addresses were searched in Utrecht and the nearby town of Abcoude as part of the investigation.

The European Union added Sison to its terror list in October 2002. He was placed on the list both as an individual and as a member of the NPA.

Sison's arrest came as a shock to some of his leftist allies in the Philippines.

Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Teodoro Casiño told the INQUIRER: "It was unexpected. There has been no development in the Philippines that would make the situation drastically different now from months ago."

The left-wing group Bayan condemned Sison's arrest and the raids on his group's offices as attacks on civil liberties.

"This bodes ill for the peace process," the group said. "The arrest was most probably undertaken with the knowledge and prodding of the Arroyo government, which is out to sabotage all hopes for peace talks."

'Incitement to murder'

Sison had filed for political asylum but his request was rejected by the Dutch authorities. They ruled, however, that he could not be sent back to the Philippines because his life would be in danger here.

De Bruin explained that Sison's arrest did not mean the Dutch planned to extradite him, as Manila had requested in 2003.

"This is a Dutch criminal case as ordering a murder even if it is committed abroad is a criminal offense under Dutch law," De Bruin said.

The official charge against Sison is "incitement to murder in the Philippines," according to Bayan spokesperson Renato Reyes, quoting Sison's lawyer in the Netherlands, Jan Fermon.

Reyes said Dutch police raided the homes of Sison, NDF panel chair Luis Jalandoni, NDF staff Ruth de Leon, and their respective offices.

"The raid is still ongoing," Reyes said when he texted the INQUIRER at around 9:30 p.m.

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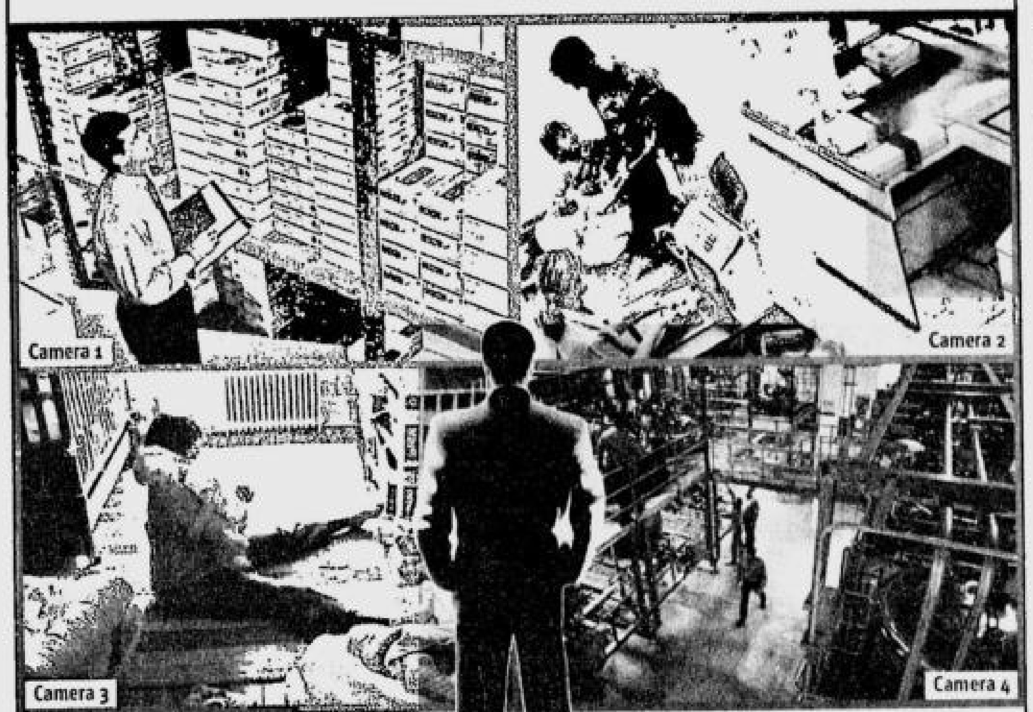

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Imeldific beauty tip: Unity, not friv

From page A1

talk with the media yesterday, can be something like the opera, "Mayo ... Bisperas ng Liwanag," a three-act opera based on National Artist Nick Joaquin's short story, "May Day Eve."

'Good, true, beautiful'

"Please say something about beauty, not the Imeldific beauty, but beauty that will unite us, beauty that will reach the soul, like this opera that is so enriching, so total, so comprehensive. If the press will only explain this..." Marcos lamented.

The widow of Ferdinand Marcos has been promoting arts and culture since her husband became President in 1965 until their ouster, 20 years later, in 1986. Marcos said she survived "persecution" by the government and "vilification" by the media because of her belief in "the good, the true and the beautiful."

"When you believe in beauty, you are on the side of God," she said.

"The most powerful people in the world are not the nuclear scientists, but the media. The nuclear scientists will send you to the grave, but the media will kill you even beyond the grave," she said.

To offset the "ugliness" of the world, Marcos said she was writing a book, "Mothering the Rising Spirit," a book about nurturing and the selfless love that mothers give to their children.

Promoting PWU opera

She was also promoting beauty in culture with the opera "Mayo ..." which will open on Sept. 11 and 12 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. The opera will be staged by the Philippine Women's University's School of Music to mark its 60th year anniversary.

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Climbers' 'new Everest': To plant trees on mountains

From page A1

(MFP) have been trekking to denuded watersheds in Central and Southern Luzon to reforest them.

Since the "Trees for Life" was launched in July, MFP president and Mt. Everest conqueror Regie Pablo has been mobilizing 100 mountaineers to plant trees in the watersheds almost every weekend.

"More than being sportsmen, we should be environmental advocates," Pablo, 36, told the INQUIRER, summing up the paradigm shift he wants to instill in the minds of his fellow mountaineers in the face of global warming.

"I don't have Mount Everest [to conquer] anymore. This is my new Everest," he said. "Whatever is left of my time with family and work, I'll pour it on this project."

Trees for Life is a joint project of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Green Army to plant 20 million trees across the country between July and November.

The project targets the reforestation of protected areas, critical watersheds, mangrove and coastal areas, agroforestry and fruit tree areas, as well as urban parks, green campuses, camps and subdivisions.

30,000 planters

The climbers from MFP, a network of close to 70 mountaineering clubs and 30,000 mountaineers, have hiked to La Mesa and Ipo watersheds and a hill in Batangas City to plant endemic tree seedlings in wide swaths of logged areas.

"We're concentrating on watersheds because they're in a critical state," Pablo said in an interview at a fast-food restaurant in Quezon City, as torrents of rain raged outside. "They sustain life, that's why we need to protect them."

The next targets in what Pablo would rather call their "tree-nurturing" activities are denuded watersheds in Laguna, Tanay and San Mateo in Rizal, Nakar in Quezon, Iba in Zambales, and Bataan.

Longtime commitment

"We don't need to convince the mountaineers about this project. As we say among ourselves, 'What's the use of being a mountaineer if the mountain isn't there anymore?'" Pablo said.

On the contrary, it's the non-mountaineers, with little consciousness of the importance of environmental protection, who are hard to convince, he said.

Mountaineers also engaged in a green activity like this in the 1980s, but not on a massive scale like now, according to Pablo.

And this isn't just a one-day activity.

After planting, the mountaineers would trudge back to the watersheds every now and then to check on the saplings and if necessary, fence them off and pull out the weeds to ensure their survival.

Tree-nurturing

"If the trees die, we have to replenish them. That's why we call it tree-nurturing," said Pablo, who also volunteers for Green Army.

Which would explain why he and some of his fellow mountaineers find their current preoccupation "more fulfilling" than scaling peaks in the country and elsewhere in the world.

"This is more fulfilling. Everest is just a personal fulfillment. But here, this involves not just me, but my family," said Pablo, an industrial engineer who is married to fellow mountaineer Melissa Simoy.

"I really want to leave this world with the assurance that the mountain I've enjoyed, the scenery that I've enjoyed, and the view that I've enjoyed would be enjoyed by my children and grandchildren."

Old advocacies

Pablo made news when he scaled Mt. Everest, the highest peak in the world, on May 17, along with four foreign members of an international expedition, becoming the seventh Filipino to achieve the feat in a span of 12 months.

Before that, he had scaled other peaks in Asia and Europe, but kept his achievements to himself.

After a monthlong rest following his conquest of Everest, Pablo decided to go back full time to his old advocacies—reforestation, renewable energy, solid waste management—and signed up for the Trees for Life.

20 million trees

He conceded the tree-nurturing project would be an uphill climb.

In the wake of the recent 2-monthlong dry spell in Luzon, Pablo doubted the goal of planting 20 million trees by the end of November would be achieved.

He also conceded that his large network of mountaineers could take as long as three years to meet its target of planting 1 million trees, not only because of the delayed rains but because of "usual limitations on logistics support."

"It's a nice dream," he said of the program's ambitious target. "But at the end of the day, you have to wake up to reality. First of all, we don't have the luxury of time. Then the rainy season has been delayed. And the weather is very erratic."

No turning back

But he and the mountaineers aren't giving up.

Apart from mobilizing climbers to plant trees, Pablo has been networking with companies, NGOs, youth organizations, religious groups, and colleges in a bid to convince them to join the project.

Thanks to his "15 minutes of fame" at Everest, he has managed to sway others about the worthiness of the cause. "The reception to the Trees for Life is very warm," he said.

So far, he has coaxed Globe Telecoms, where he works as a consultant on environmental projects, and Prudential Life, among others, to adopt denuded areas in some watersheds, and mobilize people to re-green them.

"The good thing going about this project is that a lot of people are getting involved," he said.

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ISSN 0116-2642
INQUIRER
Vol. 22 No. 262
OPINION
Email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Website: www.inquirer.net/opinion
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The Philippine Daily Inquirer, Inc. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.
•Subscription Hotline 896-6000
• 100% soy ink •

Obstruction

IF THE "HELLO, GARCI" TAPES HAD NEVER SURfaced, President Macapagal-Arroyo would be firmly in charge, there would be, at best, a token opposition, and she wouldn't be, today, the Richard Nixon of Philippine politics. But the tapes surfaced, and the country then, as now, must ask: Why does the chief victim of the wiretapping, the President, seem the least inclined to get to the bottom of the matter?

EDITORIAL

When the first (modified) versions of the tapes appeared, let no one forget that the Palace began by trying to muddle the issue with its own doctored version. Then it proceeded to wield its own interpretation of the law like a club. It threatened media with prosecution if they broadcast the tapes or published transcripts. It then issued executive issuances that were found defective by the courts, but which provided a shield for vulnerable Cabinet and military officials. It embarked on a divide-and-rule strategy by resisting both a truth commission and impeachment, until it had lobbied enough support to block both.

The President herself tried to grovel before the people. When that failed, she proceeded to do her best to intimidate those who wouldn't be induced into cooperating with her. We should never overlook the reality, however, that throughout this time, until the present, she has acted as the primary defendant, instead of the foremost victim, and that is because whether she instigated the wiretapping or not, at the heart of the tapes is the revelation of a larger crime, the subversion of democracy.

The public instinctively knew then, and on the whole continues to believe, that these revelations stripped the President of legitimacy. While the public has also, on the whole, been willing to keep an open mind, all efforts to resolve this paramount question have failed. This failure has given the President an uneasy tenure.

But there is a difference between what we, the people, knew about the "Hello, Garci" issue in 2005, and what we know today. Someone has stepped forward to testify how it was done, by whom, and to whom. That someone is Vidal Doble Jr.

In 2005, he was the kind of fugitive over whom various camps conducted a tug-of-war that the intelligence establishment won. Today, he is acting as a whistle-blower. And now the public wants to see if his allegations can be debunked, or if they can withstand sustained scrutiny.

Instead of finally resolving matters, the Palace has reached into its old bag of tricks. It has dismissed the whistle-blower out of hand, threatened to recycle discredited executive issuances, proclaimed its own interpretation of the law as the only valid one, and tried to rally its old reliables in the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Doble has finally done what he didn't do in 2005, which is to give testimony on the vital questions of who were wiretapped, by whom and how, all of which suggest a possible answer, at long last, to the question of motive. Who was interested in getting the Intelligence Service of the AFP to eavesdrop on such a wide-ranging group as a member of the Cabinet (Michael Defensor), a constitutional officer (Virgilio Garcillano) and members of the opposition? In 2005, the public could only wonder, but now we are inching closer to suspects, and the chief suspect seems to be a member of the President's official family.

These are allegations that demand an investigation. We are told that Congress can investigate with one of two purposes in mind. It can investigate in order to exercise oversight over the executive branch, or it can investigate in aid of legislation. Every aspect of these allegations touches on these two justifications to hold a Senate hearing.

Former Sen. Francisco Tatad warns of a constitutional crisis if the Senate proceeds to investigate the case. The separation of powers, he says, means the Senate cannot investigate a president unless articles of impeachment have been approved by the House.

Tatad is being true to the spirited defense he made of then-embattled President Joseph Estrada. But we are not convinced by his reasoning, and we're glad that the Senate committee on rules voted that hearing by the committee of the whole is in order.

To be sure, the Senate, at the end of the hearings, can only recommend action or amend existing legislation or pass new bills. It cannot remove the President from office without an impeachment. But it can, and should, ask: Why the President, who may have been victimized by her own people, coddles them. Why did the law prove impotent to prevent such a situation? And is it being used to protect the culprits?

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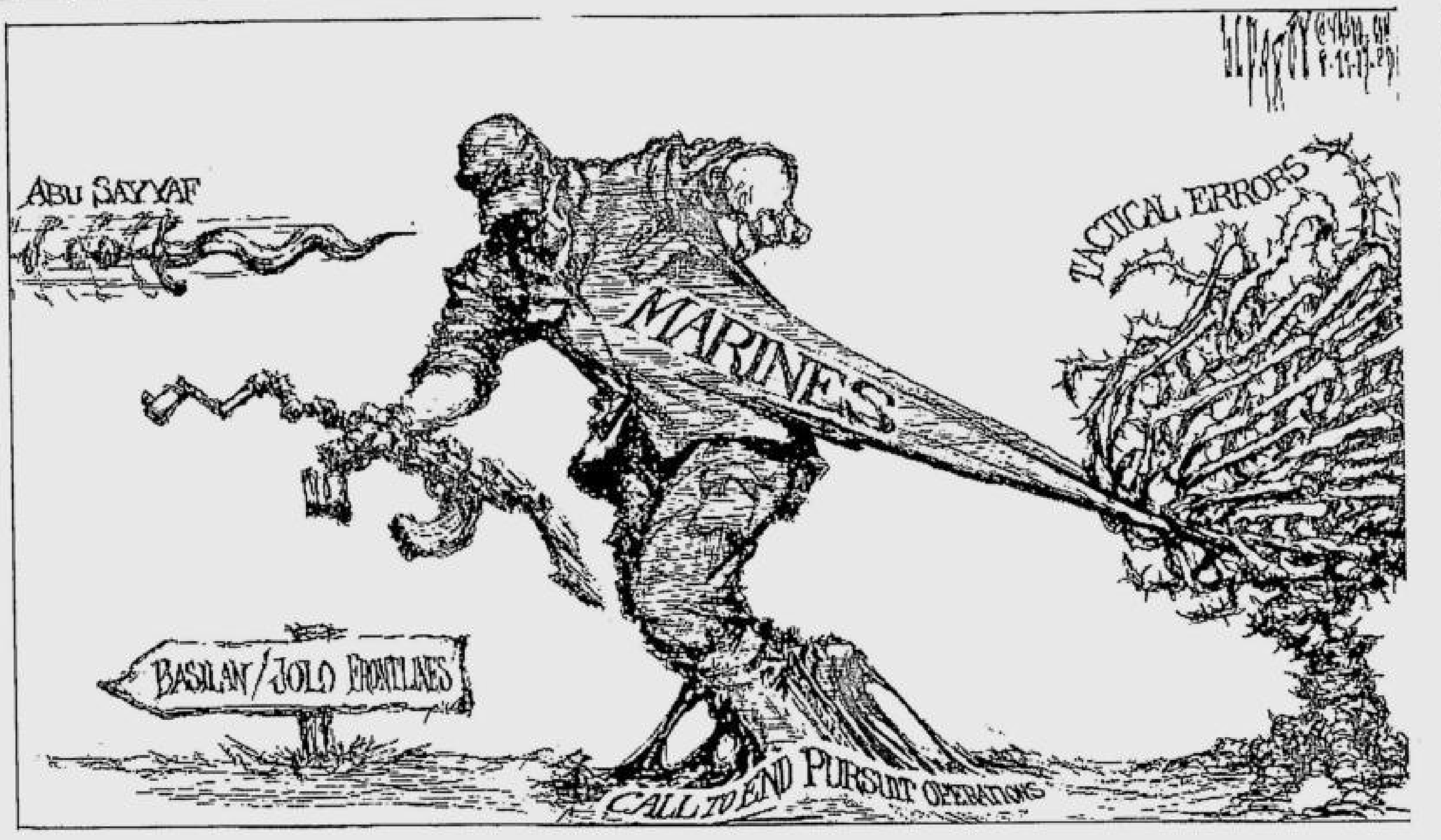

Bongbong's 'bombshell' turns out to be a dud

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE GOVERNMENT IS DESPERATE FOR cash because of tax collection shortfalls, so desperate that Finance Secretary Margarito Teves fired Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag for not meeting the collection target. Yet it was the Department of Finance that reversed a Buñag ruling and the government lost P93 million a year in cigarette excise taxes.

Here's the lowdown: The government is losing P20 for every pack of Pall Mall cigarettes sold here today. This was done by putting Pall Mall in a lower tax bracket.

Imported Pall Mall is being sold in duty-free shops at P85 per pack, inclusive of a P25 excise tax. In 2004, the British American Tobacco (BAT), owner of the Pall Mall brand, entered into a trade mark licensing agreement with La Suerte Cigar and Cigarette Co. to manufacture Pall Malls here. La Suerte initially priced its Pall Mall at P12 a pack, including a self-determined excise tax of P5.60. In 2005, it raised the retail price to P14 a pack to cover a slight increase in the excise tax to P6.35 in consideration of RA 9334, which became effective in January of that year. The move of BAT and La Suerte is obviously to pay much less excise taxes than what the law requires. That self-imposed tax made the government lose P93 million a year.

A BIR regulation states that taxes charged on the subsequent importation or *manufacture* of a new brand of cigarettes should not be lower than the taxes collected from the same brand as sold in duty-free shops. The excise tax on the locally manufactured Pall Malls should therefore be P26.06 per pack.

La Suerte is obviously selling its Pall Mall at a loss to take advantage of a quirk in the law. It has to sell Pall Mall at a loss for only 18 months after which its self-imposed tax of P6.35 will become permanent. After that, it can increase the retail price of Pall Mall but the excise tax will remain at P6.35 a pack.

In 2005, Buñag put his foot down. He ruled that the excise tax on La Suerte's Pall Malls should be P26.06 per pack. It was Finance Undersecretary Gaudencio Mendoza who pegged the excise tax on Pall Mall, which the BIR used in coming up with the P26.06 tax figure. But surprise, surprise, it was Mendoza who reversed the BIR ruling a year later.

Why? Reports say that it was the lawyer-father of a top finance official who lobbied in favor of La Suerte. Was this the real reason the DOF got rid of Buñag?

By the way, imported and locally produced Pall Malls are almost exactly the same, so much so that even an aficionado cannot distinguish between the imported and local versions in terms of taste and packaging.

And the trademark licensing agreement between La Suerte and BAT made sure of this, stating that save for the place of manufacture, the locally produced Pall Malls should be identical with the imported ones.

Surely, President Macapagal-Arroyo, hard pressed for sources of funds as she is, would be interested in finding out why the government, through an order of the DOF, has given up P93 million a year in excise taxes.

* * *

Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. claimed in his testimony at the Sandiganbayan that 60 percent of Lucio Tan's companies are actually theirs. If this is true, then they can only be ill-gotten. For why would the Marcoses hide them by using Tan as a dummy? Bongbong's testimony is an indirect admission that they were illegally acquired by his father and therefore should be forfeited to the state.

Bongbong's ballyhooed bombshell at the Sandiganbayan turned out to be a dud as Associate Justice Ma. Cristina Cortez-Estrada barred him from testifying on photocopied documents that would supposedly show his family's alleged sizable stake in Tan's firms.

At the start of the hearing, Bongbong tried to present a photocopy of a Sept. 27, 1990 letter from US Treasury Department chief counsel Michael Schmitz to then PCGG Commissioner Cesar Parlade. It spoke of certified business and financial documents seized from the Marcoses by the US Customs Service. This was part of the Marcos family's cache when they arrived at Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii after fleeing from the 1986 Edsa Revolution.

When the PCGG lawyer asked Bongbong to compare the letter to PCGG's copy of the same, Tan counsel Estelito Mendoza objected. Bongbong cannot be made to testify on the basis of photocopied documents, he said. Worse, he added, the PCGG is asking its witness to compare two Xerox copies against each other.

Mendoza has reason to be baffled. Why, indeed, would Bongbong have a copy of the letter supposedly addressed to the PCGG? And why is the PCGG asking Bongbong to testify whether his copy of the letter is the same as the one in the PCGG's custody?

In the first place, if the letter is addressed to the PCGG, then it should have at least the original certified copy in its possession. So why is Bongbong, a co-defendant in the ill-gotten wealth case, providing the PCGG with insights into the questioned documents?

The PCGG and Bongbong claim that the originals are with the US Customs Service. So why did the PCGG not lift a finger in the past 17 years to get them?

And since certified copies of the so-called "evidence" have been lying around in the PCGG office, they hardly qualify as the new evidence Bongbong claims will prove that his father and Tan were business partners.

But the bigger question is whether these documents were deliberately hidden. Every time there is a change in PCGG leadership, we hear of a syndicate involved in "hostaging" documents. The group allegedly keeps documentary evidence for sale to the highest bidder.

Museum

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THERE'S A PART IN GABRIEL GARCÍA MÁRquez's "One Hundred Years of Solitude" where the residents of the village of Macondo begin suffering from an affliction of forgetfulness. Not just amnesia or loss of memory but total blackout. They forget the use of household articles and even their names. To help them recall what they are and what they do, they attach labels to them. But soon they forget the meanings of the words themselves and the letters that form them.

I leave the reader to learn what happens afterward. But I remembered it after I read about the Bantayog ng mga Bayani now having a museum that houses memorabilia about martial law, including a reproduction of the cells that held the people who fought it. It's not exactly Madame Tussaud's House of Wax, there are only life-sized photographs of Ferdinand Marcos and Jose Diokno in lieu of lifelike wax figurines of Torquemada and Joan of Arc, but it does a creditable job of showing a horrific part of our history. Beats any tent of horror in a traveling *perya*.

I remembered Márquez particularly in light of one thing. The point of the museum, as Carolina Malay points out, is to help our youth remember one of the darkest moments of our past and make sure it doesn't happen again. "It's not their fault that they don't have memories of martial law. It's up to us, their parents, to show them something about martial law and impart lessons to them." That is admirable, except for one thing: Most of the youth, or adults, of this country don't remember Bantayog ng mga Bayani. Hell, most of them don't even know there's one.

The word "museum" to refer to the place that houses the martial law memorabilia is not a little unkindly ironic. Museums, of course, are not the most popular places in other countries, luring only the occasional tourist or the class of a determined teacher—hence "museum piece" to refer to forgotten, or ignored, relics—but they are not also horrendously unpopular ones. To go by the fate of our National Museum itself, a near-magical place where our past unravels in tangible vitality before your eyes, but which drags in only the cat and bedraggled groups of people who look like they'd rather be elsewhere, museum for us doesn't just rhyme with mausoleum, it might as well be synonymous to it.

It's nice to have reminders, if you can remember what they mean—or where they are.

FYI, Bantayog ng mga Bayani is in a perfectly accessible spot of this earth, which is the corner of Quezon Avenue and Edsa, a stone's throw (by a very feeble stone-thrower) from the MRT Quezon Avenue station. You can do worse than spend a nice Sunday afternoon there, while the breezes blow and the sun shines, looking at the names carved on the Wall of Remembrance, which belong to those who did something heroic for us in more recent times, which claimed many of their lives, and which is why the breezes blow and the sun shines for us today. You can do even worse than going to the National Museum itself and bathing in the waters of the past, which flow copiously into the present.

In this light, I'd like to repeat the suggestion I made a couple of weeks ago on how to improve our education by leaps and bounds, which is to emphasize history. My other suggestion, of course, is to line up the crooks that steal education money at the Luneta and make them history. I do think that Bantayog ng mga Bayani, the National Museum and their kind are beacons in a windswept sea, but I don't know why we should always flounder in the storm when we can sail in balmy weather. This country's inability to remember martial law is but a drop of water in the deep well that is this country's inability to remember what went before. Jason Bourne at least was determined to recover his past, Juan de la Cruz isn't. We're a rudderless country drifting aimlessly in the present.

My suggestion comes from my own experience, which I've told readers countless times over the last 20 years. (Come to think of it, this column will be 20 years before the end of this year!) That is that when I began devouring books on Philippine history in my college years, flailed on by the activism of my time, I had the sensation of having my eyes opened after being blind all my life. I read "Noli" and "Fili" outside of class, not inside it, out of dogged curiosity and not out of abject assignment, and saw Rizal climb down from his monument in Luneta and join our "dg" (discussion group) as it was called at the time. It was the first time I felt a sense of home, it was the first time I got to know who I was (you'll never know who you are until you know who you were). It was the first time I felt proud to be a Filipino.

We want to produce citizens with idealism and purpose, I don't know anything more guaranteed to do it than to make the kids read history. By whatever means, the classroom being the least of them. I've always said that if I were to run for president of this country (I really should apply for it given that the position is vacant), I'll have only three things on my agenda: food, history and education. The first should take care of the present, the second of the past, the third of the future. None of those elements is dispensable. We need all three to survive, we need all three to flourish.

Of the three, teaching history is what we most need to do because it is what we most lack. That (and, yes, GMA) is what's producing the mammoth ills we see today, not least history repeating itself. Not least the little shop of horrors in the Bantayog museum spilling over into our lives again today. The past is Ariadne's thread leading out of the Minotaur's cave. We don't have a past, we won't have a future.

We'll just be, well, a museum or mausoleum, take your pick.

GMA seizes the initiative

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

CONTRARY TO THE CLAIM OF SEN. FRANCIS Escudero that the reopening of the Garci tapes inquiry in the Senate has solidified the fractured opposition, it has in fact given President Macapagal-Arroyo an opportunity to turn the tables on her Senate adversaries. Instead of producing an issue around which the opposition senators would close ranks, the bid by Sen. Panfilo Lacson to revive the tape scandal has allowed the President to seize the initiative by shifting the issue to the economic argument, thereby painting the opposition senators as a bunch of obstructionists standing in the way of giving momentum to what she has claimed as the "highest level" of gross domestic product growth in two decades since 1991, based on the 2007 first quarter growth of 6.9 percent.

It is not the business of the opposition to provide the President with the weapon to skewer it and to shift the public debate to issues that make her look good and that damn opposition members as a gang of unpatriotic rascals out to sabotage economic development. But this is exactly what happened after Lacson presented in a privilege speech a testimony by a former military intelligence agent that he had wiretapped phone conversations between the President and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano on the results of the canvassing of the 2004 presidential election returns. Lacson's call prompted the Senate to propose a new inquiry into the tapes by convening a caucus to decide whether or not to refer the case to the Senate committee of the whole for a rehearing.

Malacañang promptly went on a counter-offensive. Not only did the President ask the Senate not to go ahead with a new inquiry, the Palace also warned that it would invoke EO 464 that bans officials and military officers from testifying at congressional hearings. The President also lashed at the opposition as "titans of hate" driven by the "politics of destruction." In a demagogic tack, worthy of a rabble-rouser, she said: "I have a country to run. I have terrorists to fight. I have a peace to win. And a bright future to secure for these children. I embrace work and just leave to the titans of hate to have a monopoly of the politics of destruction."

She launched this tirade after hearing grievances of poor residents of Barangay Sta. Teresita in Quezon City, an ideal setting for creating demons toward whom to direct public dissatisfaction and opprobrium. With this rhetoric, the President managed to revive the specter of legislative gridlock and paint the Senate anew as an obstructionist institution.

The claim of Escudero, who is touted as one of the promising bright Young Turks of the opposition, that the opposition has found a bonding element in the revival of the tape scandal is without basis. The reopening of the issue has allowed the President to draw the opposition into a debate over her economic performance in an attempt to rebuild her legitimacy which was damaged by the tape scandal.

In this propaganda battle, the opposition is losing by default through its ineptitude since the economic debate gives the President the edge by refocusing it to an area where she can do battle on her own terms. She hopes the economic argument would blur the tape issue.

The revival of the issue only served to call attention to the fragile basis of opposition solidarity. It had the effect of exposing the emptiness of their winning a slender majority in the Senate in the May election. In fact, the pro-administration bloc, which holds the balance of power in the Senate, has tended to close ranks in opposing the reopening of the investigation in the belief that it would not introduce fresh and strong evidence to prove that the President's intervention in the canvassing of votes through her conversations with Garcillano led to the tampering of the returns and to her proclamation as winner by more than one million votes, but would be an open-ended inquiry that will divert the Senate from tackling its legislative agenda and priority bills.

Already the Senate has been polarized over whether to reinvestigate the issue as a whole. Pro-administration senators are wary over reopening the hearings, fearing that the playing of illegally obtained evidence would, in the words of Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, lead to serious consequences, including the "perpetual absolute disqualification from public office" of lawmakers participating in the inquiry.

The reinvestigation has not only reinforced public negative perception that the Senate has become a forum whose priority is investigation over more productive legislation. It has also reopened a new front in the war between the Senate and the executive over EO 464. In either of the two issues, the leadership of Senate President Manuel Villar is on the line and may prove to be short-lived. Villar sits on the shaky coalition of a new majority made up of nine administration senators and six opposition senators. It is uncertain that the six opposition senators would align themselves with the eight other opposition senators when these issues are put to a vote.

In any case, the underlying issue in the reopening of the Garci tapes scandal boils down to whether the economic argument promoted by the President would prevail over the move to get to the bottom of the Garci tapes scandal in order to arrive at the truth. Both approaches seek to determine the legitimacy of the Arroyo regime. Both entail costs, but an open-ended inquiry can only lead to impasse.

* * *

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Breastfeeding: the facts

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

EARLY THIS MONTH, THE PHARMACEUTICAL and Healthcare Association of the Philippines (PHAP) came out with print ads, including in this paper, apparently timed to coincide with World Breastfeeding Week, held on the first of week of August. The ad cited, among other things, "encouraging" statistics compiled by the National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS), the Department of Health, World Health Organization and Unicef. Though unstated, the PHAP's purpose in citing these figures and conclusions was to create the impression that there is no need to further regulate the marketing and promotion of commercial breast milk substitutes since Filipino mothers are "into" breastfeeding anyway. The PHAP is an organization of powdered milk manufacturers and drug companies which are opposing new and wider-ranging guidelines on the implementation of the Milk Code issued by the DOH.

This impression that the PHAP sought to create was strongly condemned by both the DOH and the international health agencies. "We are appalled by the persistent distortion of data by PHAP," Health Undersecretary Alex Padilla said. "They propagate misleading information that seriously undermines breastfeeding in the country."

Authorities from the DOH, WHO and Unicef cited in particular the press releases and print advertisements that PHAP issued. "The timing and nature of the materials are clearly unethical and is the very reason why the new implementing rules and regulations of Executive Order 51, or the Milk Code, is all the more imperative," added Padilla.

The revised guidelines of the Milk Code impose an absolute ban on advertising, promotions, or sponsorships of breast milk substitutes up to 24 months of age. The Supreme Court is currently studying the documents submitted by the DOH and PHAP following a much publicized oral argument last month.

* * *

PADILLA says the "contentions derived from the (cited) materials are deceptive." For instance, the PHAP ads cited the 2003 NDHS conclusions that "54 percent of Filipino mothers initiate breastfeeding in the first hour of life" and "Filipino infants are being breast-fed more frequently."

"A little more than half is not an encouraging statistic," he asserted. "This ranks the Philippines as one of the countries with the lowest breastfeeding initiation rates in the world."

The same NDHS study, he said, showed dismal numbers where only 16.1 percent of Filipino infants are exclusively breast-fed for 4 to 5 months of age and 13 percent of Filipino babies were never breast-fed.

Even if more than half of Filipino mothers breastfeed their babies "in the first hour of life," what's more important is the duration of their breastfeeding. While mothers make lifesaving colostrum, which is rich in anti-bodies, available to their babies in the first few hours of life, it will take them a few more days to fully establish their milk supply. While mothers may indeed start to breastfeed, the more important question to ask is how long they do breastfeed. For now, the average duration of breastfeeding in the country is 20 days, clearly way below the minimum six-month recommended period. And with mothers enjoying a maximum of 45 days of maternity leave, there's clearly no excuse to breastfeed for so short a time.

* * *

THE WORLD Health Organization also clarified data used by PHAP, particularly its recognition of using infant formula as "appropriate."

"The WHO strongly recommends breastfeeding for its undeniable superior benefits," said WHO country representative Dr. Jean-Marc Olivé, adding that breastfeeding can prevent diseases and promote better health to both mother and child.

He also said that breastfeeding can be done by a vast majority of women and only under exceptional circumstances does WHO recognize alternative feeding practices.

The first option is expressed breast milk from the infant's own mother, WHO states. The second is breast milk from a healthy wet nurse. The third choice is breast milk from a human-milk bank.

"The use of breast milk substitute is the last resort," Dr. Olivé said. "In fact, infants who are not breast-fed, for whatever reason, should receive special attention from the health and social welfare system since they constitute a risk group."

Health studies in the past 10 years show that not breastfeeding increases the likelihood of children suffering from diarrhea, pneumonia, asthma, allergies, chronic diseases and even lower intelligence.

"Most people are also unaware that infant formula is not a sterile product," Olivé stated.

* * *

THE FOOD and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and WHO in February 2004 convened a panel of experts who concluded that intrinsic contamination of powdered infant formula with Enterobacter Sakazakii and Salmonella has caused serious illness leading to developmental difficulties and even death.

Colin Davis, the Unicef Philippines officer in charge said: "Recent statements from the infant formula industry distort clear evidence and can confuse the public regarding two important facts: one, exclusive breastfeeding in the Philippines is declining; and two, the use of formula exposes infants to serious health risks. These ads are further proof that the National Milk Code needs to be rigorously implemented."

"We want to set the record straight and call on the wisdom of the public," Duque said. "It is the duty and responsibility of the DOH to inform the public about the risks and dangers to their health, especially those that concern our children."

Earlier this year, Jean Ziegler, the special rapporteur on the right to food appointed by the United Nations Human Rights Council, described the PHAP's media campaign as "misleading, deceptive, and malicious in intent."

War propaganda

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

WHEN YOU OPEN THE "AMERICAN MEMORY" section of the wonderful website of the US Library of Congress, you will find Philippine material: pictures, texts, music and even short films made at the turn of the last century. The films related to the Filipino-American War, which run for less than a minute, include rare footage of American troops sailing to Manila from San Francisco, another showing the Americans carefully moving their horses against the current of the Agno River, and yet another showing the troops marching and kicking up dust beside a nipa hut somewhere in Pampanga. These images are very engaging because unlike static text, moving pictures definitely say much more than words.

There are a number of battle scenes that, of course, show the Americans chasing Filipinos. There are scenes showing American soldiers pursuing Emilio Aguinaldo's troops led by an officer carrying a saber while another waves the Stars and Stripes in victory. Some of these scenes from the Filipino-American War were produced by Thomas Edison, who is better known to schoolchildren as, "the man who invented the light bulb."

These are worth a second and third look, if only to get some idea of the way by which the US made propaganda in a war far away from their shores. A closer look at the actors shows that the flag carried by the "Filipinos" is but a blur, quite indistinct compared to the Stars and Stripes. The men wear white shirts and pants. They have short but obviously curly hair, and if you do not take the trouble to open the notes that come with the film clips, you will not realize that many of Edison's war films were not shot in the Philippines during battle, but somewhere in New Jersey with a cast of blacks impersonating Filipinos!

One of my favorite films is titled "Colonel Funston swimming in the Baglag [Bagbag] River." Funston led the team who went all the way up to Palanan, Isabela, to capture Emilio Aguinaldo who had just celebrated his birthday in 1901. In the film, Funston is shown with his men on a raft with the Filipinos jumping about menacingly on the opposite side of the river. Ever the hero, Funston takes off his coat and shoes, then dives into the river. He swims to the other side (which makes me wonder why the Filipinos don't shoot at him but at the men on the raft who return fire). When Funston reaches the riverbank, he stands up and splashes about and the Filipinos scamper away, running into the woods.

Of course, this is yet another propaganda film and is only viewed for entertainment today. But a century ago, Americans who went to nickelodeons to watch these films on coin-operated viewing machines invented by Edison got a different sense of how the war in the Philippines was proceeding and how they were winning.

My students enjoy every minute of these films. Sometimes, we repeat viewing some to laugh again.

There are so many tools to make the classroom more engaging these days. Applications like PowerPoint and Keynote save the teacher the trouble of writing on the board, and visual aids are easier to project. I cannot imagine how my slides or acetate were considered "cutting edge" two decades ago. Use these today and your students will know how Jurassic you are. Fortunately, my teaching assistants have converted my lecture notes into presentations and I have spent a lot of holiday time transferring my pictures, slides and other visual aids into Keynote presentations.

Everybody knows that last Monday's holiday was for the commemoration of National Heroes Day, but very few people aside from the small group that attended the simple but meaningful ceremonies at Libingan ng mga Bayani in Fort Bonifacio knew what it was all about. I'm all for the so-called "holiday economics" but only if people at least know and appreciate the reason a particular holiday was put in our calendar, and why it was moved to the closest Monday. When we do "holiday economics," we tend to forget the true essence of a holiday. We may add revenue to the domestic tourism industry but we fail to feed our soul.

It is unfortunate that National Heroes Day is often overshadowed by June 12 when we remember the Philippine Revolution. It is also overshadowed by Bataan Day when we remember those who fell in World War II. So one wonders why we have this redundant holiday at all. One would think that on National Heroes Day our flag would fly and fly prominently throughout the day, but then after the flag fatigue of June 12 whatever flags remain from Independence Day become as meaningless as buntings for a fiesta.

I remembered the flag and National Heroes Day as I watched an early US film titled "Aguinaldo's Navy," which was shot somewhere in Manila. If you expect armored warships with rapid-fire guns, you will be disappointed to see frail vessels on the water and a man furiously paddling a banca.

In 1898, all sorts of seacraft annoyed George Dewey by flying the Philippine flag. Their skippers were brought to Dewey's flagship and reminded that our flag was not recognized. When one Filipino dared to object, he was thrown overboard.

Obscure men like him should be remembered on National Heroes Day even as we practice holiday economics.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

The English divide

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

MANY OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS HAVE HEARD (some even imitate) Singaporean English, with its distinct singsong quality and numerous words borrowed from Minnan Chinese (for example, "chao chao" to mean rotten or foul, and the characteristic "la" at the end of a sentence). Singlish, as it is sometimes called, is a lingua franca, spoken by most Singaporeans, regardless of class or ethnicity.

Has the same thing happened to Filipino English? Last Friday, I described how Filipino English still remains a language of the upper classes. Because of that association, Filipino English becomes part of middle-class aspirations. Through the years, several variations of Filipino English have emerged (old rich, new rich, upper class and middle class) reflecting our stratified society. English seems to divide us.

'Arroyisms'

The variations in Filipino English, together with its social connotations, are not unique. American English, too, has many variations, and those who speak the southern dialects, with their drawl and their own unique words and phrases, tend to be the butt of jokes. President George W. Bush's Texas English is an example.

But it isn't just his southern drawl that gets Bush into trouble. He has become notorious for malaprops, comic misuses of language, with several websites now compiling "Bushisms." Our own President is gaining a reputation for "Arroyisms" as well, except that with her, it's lapses in Filipino. This happens because for President Macapagal-Arroyo and other speakers of Filipino English, English is actually a first language. It is the language in which one thinks, so when Filipino is used, the thought processes are actually running in English, with the brain frantically trying to keep up with the translation into Filipino.

An article by Horacio Paredes in Abante last year brought together some of these Arroyisms from her various speeches. These include "*Mag-impok ng enerhiya*" to mean "Let's save energy," "*Inutusan ko na si* (two government officials) *upang magkaroon ng tubig ang inyong mga pipa*" (I have instructed [two officials] to bring water into your pipes (the pipes being the cement ones), "*Napaikot na natin ang ekonomiya*" (We have turned the economy around), "*buto ng ekonomiya at dugo ng komersyo*" (backbone of the economy and lifeblood of commerce), "*imprastrakturang mang-aaliw ng mamumuhunan*" (infrastructure that would attract investors), "*lumipad na presyo*" (soaring prices).

Carabao English

Many English words do enter Filipino, and end up being used by people on the street. I already mentioned that in this year's Sawikaan, a search for "Salita ng Taon" or word of the year, the winner was "*miskol*" from "missed call," with "*roro*" (roll on, roll off) and "*friendster*" as runners-up. Last year, "*lobat*" (from low battery) won, with "*botox*" (the cosmetic procedure) and "toxic" as runners-up. In 2005, it was "*huweteng*" (from the gambling *jueteng*), followed by "*pasaway*" and "*tibak/t-back*" (from *aktibista*, which in turn comes from activist).

Note that the words of the year are chosen also based on saliency, related to hot issues of the day. Nevertheless, it is still significant that many of the terms used to describe the burning issues are derived from English.

Purists might bristle at the way English is "invading" Filipino, but even the extremely nationalistic Japanese have borrowed numerous words from many Western languages and, in the postwar era, from English, the language of their erstwhile enemy. These borrowed words are written in Katakana, a syllabary (meaning written symbols representing syllables like ba, ka, da).

The English words that enter Filipino are also "Filipinized" in pronunciation and spelling, and subjected to Filipino grammatical rules. English nouns, for example, often become verbs, conjugated in the Filipino way (for example, the present tense "*Mag-Internet tayo,*" the past perfect tense "*Nag-Internet ka na?*" even a future tense "*Mag-Iinternet ako mamaya*").

The incorporation of English into Filipino does not necessarily reflect American cultural domination. English words are transformed to take on new meanings, often reflecting the Filipino gestalt. Thus, *miskol* no longer just means a missed call on the cell phone. Ateneo de Naga professor Adrian Remodo, who "nominated" the word, explained that miskol is enmeshed in the *paramdam* (feeling your way) psychology of Filipinos. An intentional split second ring, he says, connotes "*Buhay pa ako. Magparamdam ka naman* (I am still alive. Please get in touch soon)."

At the level of popular culture, out in the streets and in the communities, what we have is something called "carabao English," held in disdain by Filipinos who consider themselves proper speakers of English.

Chiswisang Backlush (gay slang) actually has a lot of this carabao English (and carabao Spanish), as exemplified by a recent title for a TV documentary: "learningin ang lenguang dingerszie," which means "Learn gay language." And just as Chiswisang Backlush develops partly in response to discrimination, a way of poking fun at society, carabao English deliberately twists, even mangles English words' pronunciations and meanings, a way of saying, hey, how how the carabao, my English is carabao but I'm not ashamed of it, just as I am not ashamed of my social status. Imitating the English of the upper classes, whom the masses call "*inglisera*" (prone to using English) may even be mildly spiteful. "Your every wish is my command," I once heard a harassed store clerk mutter behind a bossy *inglisera* manager.

There may even be bittersweet social commentary in carabao English. For example the urban poor themselves will call their communities "depressed" and talk about having to use "criminal water," sometimes to refer to the tap water, which they don't trust, and at other times to the expensive "mineral" water that they have to buy, but which they suspect is just recycled tap water. "Criminal water" speaks of the way the poor are caught between the devil and the deep blue sea when it comes to their drinking water.

There's irony in the way English follows our class divisions, and yet might sometimes end up uniting people, such as the poor. "*Ay, ganyan ang buhay, parang life,*" I've heard the poor (and middle class) sigh, and others nod in agreement. Carabao English is, ultimately, part of our evolving Filipino, and it's not all despair. More often, carabao English is light-hearted, marked by intense punning and rhyming that spices up the sense of camaraderie, as when young urban poor kids go, "Let's go, *sago*" or "What's up, *ulam naming sapsap.*"

Carabao English is not a variation of Filipino English. It belongs instead to Filipino, a work in progress. I wouldn't be surprised if even the Arroyisms eventually blend into carabao English, as people imitate the President. So, as we continue our quest for a national language, allow me to paraphrase one of the Arroyisms, "*Sana ay magkatotoo ang ating mga panaginip*" literally but not yet correctly Filipino, may our (linguistic) dreams come true.

What can P12 buy these days?

TWELVE PESOS IS JUST ENOUGH TO BUY a half-kilo of rice or three packs of noodles.

In the face of endless price hikes, job insecurity and low wages, the P12 wage hike is clearly unjust and immoral. It hardly gives economic relief to our underpaid workers and their families.

The words of the Marian Sisters—"at the table of peace are food and justice"—are timely reminders for the nation's legislators and, most especially, for the President, they who have conspired to keep Filipino labor cheap for the benefit of local and foreign business.

For seven years now, the Arroyo-controlled Congress has succeeded to block the passage of the P125/day wage hike bill. Worse, instead of ensuring that food and justice are on the tables of poor workers, the Arroyo administration has brought injustice and disorder into the homes of the families of the victims of extrajudicial killings.

The P12 wage hike is a gross insult to the dignity of labor. We owe a lot to the poor workers and peasants. They work in difficult conditions just to feed the nation, to construct buildings and to produce all sorts of material needs for daily living. The moral thing to do is to place the workers' interests above the profits of business. In fact, the P125 across-the-board wage hike demanded by the workers' unions under Kilusang Mayo Uno—assuming it would be granted this time—is very small in the face of expensive basic commodities and services, whose prices have been endlessly going up for years.

It is deplorable that the Arroyo administration consistently ignores the clamor for a substantial wage hike. It can only grant P12 for the poor workers even as it readily spends billions of pesos to lavishly host meetings such as the Asean Summit. It is clear that pro-poor economic policies to ensure that food and justice are on every table are the least of the Arroyo administration's concerns.

—AMIE DURAL,
secretary general,
Promotion of Church
People's Response (PCPR),
879 Edsa, Quezon City

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'Orwellian speak' and corruption

I AGREE WITH CONRADO DE QUIROS. The kind of mental or cultural corruption that is taking place in the country these days is "the fiercest, most terrifying kind, the kind that doesn't just turn people into paupers but into zombies." ("Cause and effect," INQUIRER, 8/7/07) To me, it's like a virus that poisons the mind, and its effect is long term. This virus is as destructive as the radioactive smoke Chernobyl spewed a few decades back. Its effect is even more terrifying than any war ever caused by man, as it turns people into sickos—or to borrow De Quiros' word, zombies. This virus is characterized by government's attempt at deception, using the power of language, the authority of the law and the vice of men.

Despotic governments nowadays have become shrewd at keeping power. Material weapons have been edged by a more powerful weapon—language.

Language, like a machine, can be used to serve the purpose of its user. What the government is doing is corrupting the language, removing all shades from language, leaving simple dichotomies (sad and happy, pleasure and pain, rebel and reactionary) to strengthen the total primacy of the state. This is also related to the concept of "binary opposition," which involves a pair of theoretical opposites.

Through this concept, the government can easily give a word two or more meanings in classifying who are pro-government and who are not. So if you criticize the government, you will be labeled as a communist or worse, as a terrorist, even if you do not believe in the ideology. Or if you criticize the President, you are pro-Erap.

The government is now engaging in "Orwellian speak" in sorting out its enemies. It also uses surveillance apparatuses, tracking devices and hi-tech eavesdropping equipment to monitor suspected terrorists. And all this is allowed under the despotic Human (in)Security Act, which strips bare the Arroyo administration's anatomy of despotism.

—FROILAN VINCENT BERSAMINA,
2/F Engineering Bldg.,
University of the East, SH Loyola St.
cor. C. M. Recto Ave., Manila

A 'stupid' message

WHAT WAS THE REASON BEHIND THE DECISION to destroy several smuggled and abandoned vehicles worth over P10 million? (INQUIRER, 8/16/07) "To send a message to smugglers"? What message?

The only message smugglers respect is arrest and imprisonment. They must be laughing in derision at the very stupid Customs officials who recommended the destruction of the cars.

The cars belonged to either the government or to private entities. In either case, the law prohibits non-owners of the goods to destroy pieces of property which have value and are not prohibited from being exchanged or used.

During the period 1992-1998, when Guillermo Parayno Jr. was Customs commissioner, he sold, by public auction, over 900 smuggled, seized and abandoned vehicles (including a P7.4-million, brand-new Mercedes-Benz and several Porsches stolen in the streets of San Francisco and shipped by smugglers to the Philippines). Thus, Parayno enriched the Filipino people by hundreds of millions of pesos.

To carry out the auction and at the same time protect the interests of local car manufacturers, Parayno sought the assistance of the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (Campi) and the then Philippine Motor Association (now Automobile Association of the Philippines). Even totally dilapidated cars left abandoned at the piers for over a decade were auctioned thus, generating some income for the government.

There are SOPs for destroying smuggled, harmful substances or prohibited drugs like shabu; certainly, these do not include crude and primitive methods like crushing, which was the one used in destroying the cars.

If the government is to be consistent, why not destroy all smuggled goods? Why not just throw smuggled rice or sugar to the sea? Why not just burn smuggled oil and sink the tanker that carried it into the sea—"to send a message" to the smugglers and their associates? Why not just feed seized canned goods to pigs?

On second thought, why not destroy all the smuggled cars now at the ports so that the Filipino people will have more proof that those who approved and carry out the destruction are plain stupid?

—NING SANTOS,
46 Simoun St., Sta. Mesa Heights, QC

Search for whole truth is a human compulsion

IN AN AUG. 21 NEWS STORY, THE INQUIRER reported that former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa was calling for an end to the search for the mastermind of the assassination of Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. He was quoted as saying "Better left closed. No sense anymore in trying to find out (who ordered his killing). If anything could be found out, it would have been revealed at this time. If we haven't found out by this time, we will never find out."

With all due respect, Narvasa is probably wrong. We humans are constrained by intellect and by our societal needs to constantly search for historical veracity—"the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth." Newly discovered facts, or the uncovering of suppressed facts, or the emergence of technologically derived facts—those are factors that demand the relentless search for historical truth.

When the actors and players of a phenomenal event are still "alive and kicking," it is both easier and more difficult to unearth truth. In one sense, the relatively recent facts are simply there to discover; but in another sense, anyone can see that the facts are simply being concealed by the guilty. Perhaps Narvasa, like many of us, fear that the truth about Ninoy's death may simply constitute a societal inconvenience. As T.S. Eliot put it in his poem "Gerontion":

"After such knowledge, what forgiveness? Think now
History has many cunning passages, contrived corridors
And issues, deceives with whispering ambitions,
Guides us by vanities. Think now
She gives when our attention is distracted
And what she gives, gives with such supple confusions
That the giving famishes the craving."

But the core values in our heritage do not permit surrender to the inconveniences of the moment. Ultimately, the ancient admonition of the Christ must prevail: "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free." (John 8:32)

—VICENTE B. CHUIDIAN,
Suites 1410 and 1702,
Sunset View Tower,
2230 Roxas Blvd., Pasay City

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. Al-547 Series of 2007.

Republic of the Philippines
Malacañan Palace
Manila

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo
President
Republic of the Philippines

Warm greetings to the officers and members of the Drugstores Association of the Philippines (DSAP) as you hold your 11th National Convention.

Our government's low-cost medicine program dubbed as "Gamot na Mabisa at Abot-Kaya (GMA 50) Project has addressed the problem of limited access to affordable medicines by our less fortunate countrymen. I acknowledge your association's wholehearted cooperation and collaboration in this national undertaking, without which our efforts in this area would not have gotten this far.

This year, through the Philippine International Trading Corporation (PITC), we will be importing up to a billion worth of low-cost medicines. We will go to this extent if only to prove our commitment to lower the prices, by as much as 50 percent, of drugs and medicines frequently purchased by majority of our people. Walk with me through the entire length of our journey.

Mabuhay Kayong Lahat!

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
Office of the Secretary
Province of Cebu

Francisco T. Duque III
Secretary of Health

Warm greetings to the officers and members of the Drugstores Association of the Philippines on the holding of their 11th National Convention, with the theme "A Decade of Challenges: Looking Forward, Surging High".

Your commitment to provide Filipinos access to quality medicines and strengthening pharmaceutical industry is commendable. May this convention provide the impetus to your members to pursue a higher level of competence and effectiveness to further improve the health and well being of our countrymen.

May this occasion be eventful and productive. To the organizers and participants of this convention, my congratulations to all of you.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

Republic of the Philippines
Office of the Governor
Province of Cebu

Gwendolyn F. Garcia
Governor

In behalf of the people of Cebu, I warmly greet and welcome the Drugstores Association of the Philippines (DSAP) on its 11th National Convention on September 5, 6, & 7, 2007.

Cebu is proud to host this event — a gathering of business leaders in the drugstore industry from all over the country. Your theme "A Decade of Challenges: Looking Forward, Surging High" clearly articulates the organization's steadfast commitment to offer above standard health products and provide excellent service to your clientele.

May the convention encourage each and every member of DSAP to be true to the ideals of their Association and to be responsive to the challenges and demands of the times.

Mabuhay!

Republic of the Philippines
Office of the Mayor
Province of Cebu

Tomas R. Osmeña
City Mayor

Delegates and participants of the 11th National Convention of the Drugstores Association of the Philippines (DSAP), welcome to Cebu City!

My warm greetings to all of you and hope that you will achieve your convention aim of addressing how to be able to serve better the Filipino people by working hand in hand with the government's agenda in establishing health care programs in the country. I am also congratulating your organization for your notable efforts in community building particularly in offering above-standard health products and in providing exceptional customer service to meet the needs of the increasing populace.

Rest assured that you will always have my support in all your noteworthy endeavors for the betterment of our society.

Congratulations and my best wishes to you all!

Drugstores Association of the Philippines

11th DSAP National Convention

A Decade of Challenges: Looking Forward Surging High

September 5, 6 & 7 2007
Waterfront Hotel and Convention Center
Lahug, Cebu City

Looking Forward, Surging High

The Drugstores Association of the Philippines (DSAP) will be having its 11th Annual National Convention from September 5 to 7 at the Water Front Hotel & Convention Center in Lahug, Cebu City.

This year's convention, with its theme, "A Decade of Challenges: Looking Forward, Surging High," will definitely leave all of the 1,500 delegates and more, well informed and unquestionably inspired after all the topics of this 3-day conference is done. The group celebrates its stronghold in the pharmaceutical retail industry together with an impressive list of Co-presentors and major sponsors - Macro Pharma, Nestle Nutrition, PHAREX, PHILUSA, Procter & Gamble, SEL-J & Plethico, Unilab, Unilever, Wyeth and Zuellig Philippines.

Since its advent in 1984, DSAP has not once failed to support the cause of its 2000 members as it has consistently upheld its vision of becoming the most credible authority in shaping the drugstore industry. DSAP has always been shaping the drugstore industry. DSAP has always been proactive when it comes to helping its members deal with the volatile changes in the marketplace by participating in deliberative talks with various government agencies and by spearheading a number of training initiatives and workshops.

DSAP's 11th Annual National Convention serves to further educate its members about the pertinent issues facing their business. Among the key plenary topics highlighted in the event include: "Sharing of Best Drugstore Practices" by two distinguished DSAP Quality Awardees; "QUO Vadis, Drugstores?" by Mr. Greg Martin, VP of United Laboratories; "Change and Survival" by Prof. Jacinto Gavino Jr. of the Asian Institute of Management; "Small ways a Filipino can do to help the country" by Atty. Alex Lacson; and, "Business Opportunity in Nutraceuticals" by Jaime Galvez Tan, M.D.

The convention will also be a time to acknowledge the works of distinguished DSAP members. On the evening of September 6, 2007, the association will be holding the DSAP Awards Night wherein select members of the organization will be given accolades for Lifetime Achievement, Chapter Achievements, Presidential Merit, and Generic Education. Famous celebrities like Martin Nievera, Jay Cayuca and Arthur Manuntag and many more equally illustrious stars will be there as well to provide powerhouse musical performances.

Indeed, the DSAP convention will not only provide the perfect venue for celebrating more than 10 years of successfully overcoming challenges, it will also considerably heighten the organization's morale and camaraderie as it is one of the few social occasions attended by all the DSAP members. With the event's power lineup of talks and entertainment, members of DSAP will most definitely surge high in the Philippine pharmaceutical retail industry.

Program

Day 1 September 5 (Wednesday)
Attire : Red DSAP Shirt
Registration
Opening of Trade Exhibits
Opening of Hospitality Suites
Opening of Election Precincts
Dinner with *Macropharma*
Come in Red Attire

Day 2 September 6 (Thursday)
Attire: Business Suit
Ladies - In Dark Blazer
Gentlemen - Long Sleeve Polo Shirt
Eucharistic Celebration
Opening Ceremonies
Keynote Address: Sen. Pia Cayetano
Sel J Portion
Plenary Session 1:
"Quo Vadis Drugstores?"
Lunch with NESTLE
Plenary Session 2:
"Sharing of Best Drugstore Practices
PHILUSA Portion
Plenary Session 3:
"Yakap ka ng DSAP"
Zuellig Philippines Portion
Plenary Session 4:
"Change and Survival"
Exhibit Activities / Free Time
DSAP Awards Night
Ladies - Long Gown
Gentlemen - Coat and Tie
"An Evening of Glitz and Glamour with UNILAB"

Day 3 September 7 (Friday)
Attire: Business Suit
Ladies - In Dark Blazer
Gentlemen - Long Sleeve Polo Shirt
President's Report
Plenary Session 5:
"Small Ways a Filipino can
Do to Help the Country"
UNILEVER Portion
Procter and Gamble Portion
Plenary Session 6:
"Business Opportunity in Nutraceuticals"
Lunch with PHAREX
Plenary Session 7:
"Laughter, Over the Counter: Arts and
Sciences of Healing your Costumers
and Making Them Happy"
General Membership Meeting
Exhibit Activities / Free Time
Dinner - Cebu International Convention Center
DSAP Hour
Attire: Psychedelic
(Come in 60's & 70's attire)
Wyeth SURPRISES

Day 4 September 8 (Saturday)
Optional Tour

Co-presented By:

Centrum Complete · Multivitamins Enervon · Macropharma Corporation · Nestle Nutrition · Pharex · Pond's · RHEA · SEL-J / Plethico

Sponsored By: Vicks · Zuellig Pharma

Drugstores Association of the Philippines

Ma. Erlinda B. Pascual
DSAP National President

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 11th DSAP National Convention. The event, themed A Decade of Challenges: Looking Forward, Surging High, aims to present deeper insights on health care product retailing and to provide better tools in the face of future challenges. As seen in previous years, every convention is a unique opportunity for us to discuss various topics concerning our business. This year, thanks to the team led by Mr. Rodel M. Vizconde, is no exception. Look forward to an interactive program discussing relevant issues in the industry. Be awed by the latest products and technologies presented by our exhibitors. Experience the charm of the "Queen City of the South" and enjoy the exemplary facilities of the Cebu Waterfront Hotel and Convention Center. Your enthusiasm and active participation in the activities will ensure the Convention's success.

On behalf of DSAP, I would also like to express our thanks to our sponsors and business partners. Most have been with us since 1997. We would also like to express our appreciation for the confidence shown by our new co-presentors and major sponsors. May our partnership continue to grow stronger in the coming years.

Again, it is with great pleasure that I welcome everyone to the 11th DSAP National Convention!

Gloria N. de Chavez
Chairperson, DSAP Board

Strengthening the pharmaceutical retail industry's global competitiveness is one of the core goals of DSAP. The Association has continuously championed the cause of its 2000 members since 1984 by working with key industry players to facilitate cooperation among various sectors and to provide brainstorming venues to tackle the improvement of Philippine drugstores.

The 11th DSAP National Convention will further strengthen the ties among drugstore owners and various sectors as we come together to address critical issues and regulations affecting our industry. Our convention's theme sums it all up. Indeed, it has been a decade of challenges but we look forward to surging even higher in unity amidst an increasingly volatile business climate. Together, let us explore new opportunities to enhance our businesses and discover prospects for changes in policies that affect us.

I would also like to thank our sponsors for their unwavering support. We look forward to an even stronger partnership with you in the coming years. Finally, to all the delegates, I join you in partnership and fellowship as we come together for the 11th DSAP National Convention. May this 3-day convention be a memorable and insightful one for all of us.

Mabuhay ang DSAP!

Rodel "Bhoyett" M. Vizconde
Chairman
11th DSAP National Convention

Welcome, delegates of the 11th DSAP National Convention at the Cebu Waterfront Hotel and Convention Center! On behalf of the Organizing Committee, I am pleased to tell you that we have made every effort to make this year's convention even more exciting than the last. We've opened our doors to two new co-presentors, organized a trade exhibit that will showcase the latest innovations in the industry, and we've also embraced high technology solutions for our stage designs. Convening under the theme, A Decade of Challenges: Looking Forward, Surging High, this three-day event will not be a success if it were not for our committee's dedicated and hard working team. I would like to commend each one of them for all the time and effort they've invested to make this event work.

I would also like to express our gratitude for the overwhelming support of our sponsors Macropharma, Nestle Nutrition, Pharex, RHEA, SEL-J / Plethico, Unilab, Unilever, Wyeth, Procter & Gamble, Zuellig Philippines, and trade partners who have constantly believed in our work. Finally, we would also like to thank you, our dear colleagues, for being sources of our inspiration as we go about our work. Welcome and enjoy this much anticipated event!

TO (RE)OPEN OR NOT: The Senate committee on rules holds a caucus on Tuesday to deliberate on the proposal of Sen. Panfilo Lacson to reopen the "Hello Garci" case based on new testimony by a retired military intelligence agent. From left, Senators Rodolfo Biazon, Juan Ponce Enrile, Joker Arroyo, Francis Pangilinan, Nene Pimentel and Jamby Madrigal. ROGER MARGALLO

HELLO, TRO: Sen. Miriam Santiago delivers a privilege speech on illegal wiretapping and warns that if the Senate votes to inquire anew into the "Hello Garci" case, she and her Senate allies will seek a TRO from the Supreme Court. ROGER MARGALLO

GOODBYE OR HELLO, GARCI: More senators on the committee on rules discussing the Lacson proposal, from right, Senators Panfilo Lacson, Francis Escudero, Mar Roxas, Noynoy Aquino and Alan Peter Cayetano. ROGER MARGALLO

GMA Senate allies to stop playing of 'Garci' tape

From page A1

lano dealing with rigging the results of the 2004 presidential election.

"It is a crime to wiretap, and it is a crime to use a wiretap, by talking about its contents," Santiago said in a privilege speech meant to dissuade her colleagues from playing the "Hello Garci" tape, or using its transcript, thus risking violating Republic Act No. 4200 or the Anti-Wiretapping Law.

Previous investigations conducted in 2005 and 2006 by committees in the House of Representatives and the Senate produced no conclusive findings, denying the nation a closure on an issue that had plunged Ms Arroyo into the worst crisis of her presidency.

Committee of the whole

Senate President Manuel Villar announced the Senate would vote today on whether to reopen the probe.

Villar made the statement after the Senate committee on rules, where the issue had been initially tossed, decided by a 6-2 vote that the committee of the whole had jurisdiction over the matter.

Villar, however, was doubtful whether the legal bogey raised by the administration senators would spook the opposition and independent senators who, he believed, would vote for the reopening of the case.

"What is important is the decision of the majority of the Senate. We just wanted to be convinced that those against the reopening were presenting valid arguments because it's hard to stop these things in the Senate," Villar said.

Opposition has the numbers

Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who presented the video testimony of Doble to push for the reopening of the case, expressed confidence the Senate would vote to pursue the case.

"We definitely have the numbers. The ban on the use of wiretapped conversations applies only to private persons and not public officials, based on the original Senate deliberations," said Lacson.

Administration Sen. Joker Arroyo was unfazed, despite conceding that the administration senators did not have the numbers to block the playing of the Garci tape.

"We might have been outnumbered but we were never out-thought or out-argued," claimed Arroyo. He belittled as "fit for the House of Representatives" the arguments raised by some of his colleagues for the reopening of the case.

Accessory to a crime

In her speech, Defensor said: "In the language of the Anti-Wiretapping Law, we prohibit possession, replay, or communication of the contents of the illegal wiretap. Otherwise, the Senate would be an unwitting accessory in [the commission of] a crime."

Santiago warned that if the Senate proceeded to use the Garci tape as evidence, senators who shared her view should "feel free" to file a petition with the Supreme Court.

" However, that should be a last option, because we, in the legislative branch, should turn to the judicial branch only when we dispute the construction of the Constitution by the executive branch," Santiago said.

"When there is an internal dispute among ourselves in the Senate, we should settle it here, and avoid going to court."

Absolute ban

Santiago said that during the hearings, "full attention should be paid on whether the alleged illegal wiretap operations of the Isafp (Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines) and even the PNP (Philippine National Police) may have included Congress members [while] pinpointing criminal liabilities."

Santiago stressed that the constitutional ban on the use of illegally wiretapped conversation was "absolute" except in two instances—when authorized by a court order or done on the grounds of public safety or order.

"But neither exception is applicable in the present case confronting the Senate," Santiago said.

"The constitutional language is absolute, and permits no exception in our country. Parliamentary immunity does not trump privacy of communication. For any of our colleagues to argue before media that so-called 'public interest' authorizes use in a congressional hearing of an illegal wiretap, is to exhibit doctrinal confusion and jurisprudential colonial mentality in constitutional law."

Public interest

The Constitution provides that an illegal wiretap is "inadmissible for any purpose in any proceeding," Santiago said.

Opposition Senators Rodolfo Biazon and Francis Escudero pushed their case for the reopening of the "Hello Garci" probe for the sake of public interest, but Santiago brushed their arguments aside, stressing that the law was on her side.

"The record of this illegal wiretap was played and replayed to the point of surfeit during the aborted impeachment proceedings in the House of Representatives and in the media," Santiago said.

"If they were able to get away with that constitutional violation, it was because no one bothered to bring a suit in court. But what the Lower House has wrongfully done, cannot possibly be held up for emulation by this Upper House. On the contrary, it is the duty of the Senate to educate the House on pressing points of constitutional law."

The two Houses of Congress had previously inquired into the scandal.

Inconclusive findings

Five House committees came up with an inconclusive report, saying their hearings "only raised more issues and answered none."

The Senate defense committee was unable to finish its inquiry after Ms Arroyo issued Executive Order No. 464 forbidding government and military officials from testifying at congressional hearings.

Sen. Richard Gordon said he would attend the hearings of the committee on "Hello Garci" if the tape recordings would not be used.

"I will not be part of a sham," he said.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said there had been no closure to the issue because officials from the executive branch and the military who had been invited to attend previous hearings hid behind Ms Arroyo's EO 464 to keep themselves beyond the Senate reach.

A testy reply

Interpellating Santiago, Escudero raised the point that the senators could begin their probe while deferring a vote on whether to play the tapes until the issue presented itself.

Santiago testily replied: "Mr. President ... I refuse to yield the floor any further to this gentleman because I do not agree with his premises."

With reports from Inquirer.net and Inquirer Research

DOTC chief sued over broadband deal with China's ZTE Corp.

From page A1

dered by Philippine taxpayers in the ZTE contract is iniquitous compared with the $240-million project cost proposed by AHI," Padilla said in a complaint filed yesterday with the Office of the Ombudsman.

Covered by the election period during which no government contract should be signed, Mendoza and Yu Yong, ZTE vice president, inked the deal on April 21 in ceremonies witnessed by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

On the same day, Trade Secretary Peter Favila signed with Chinese authorities a $460-million deal to build a satellite-based backbone for the Cyber Education Project (CEP) on behalf of the Department of Education.

Both agreements were sealed in Boao, China.

Senate probe

For his part, Sen. Edgardo Angara said the Senate would investigate the "indecent haste" in allocating P26.4 billion for the CEP.

"Before embarking on a P26.4 billion worth of project, I think we should first ask why no First World country has adopted this. No studies have been made regarding the effectiveness of TV-based instruction in basic education," Angara said in a statement.

Aside from citing Mendoza, Padilla's complaint named Assistant Secretaries Lorenzo Formoso and Elmer Soneja as respondents.

Soneja was sued in his capacity as chair of the DOTC bids and awards committee for information and communications technology (BAC-ICT).

The respondents included four top ZTE executives led by its chair, Hou Weigui, vice president Yu, Manila office chief representative George Zhu Ying and executive director Fan Yan.

Padilla also alerted antigraft investigators about several 'John Does" or "public officers and private individuals who conspired with the respondents to defraud the government by entering into an illegal contract with ZTE Corp."

All aspects suspicious

The lawmaker asked the Ombudsman to prosecute Mendoza and the others for violation of the antigraft law and the Government Procurement Reform Act.

"The officials I have charged are liable for misleading the public and executing this anomalous contract and should be punished accordingly," Padilla said in a statement.

"There was no bidding done for this project, and under the law all telecommunications projects of the national government have to be bid out."

"All aspects of this contract are suspicious because they actually tried to hide it from the public. Even the Department of Justice ended up looking silly when it came out with an opinion that the contract was legal even though it had not even received a copy from the DOTC," Padilla said.

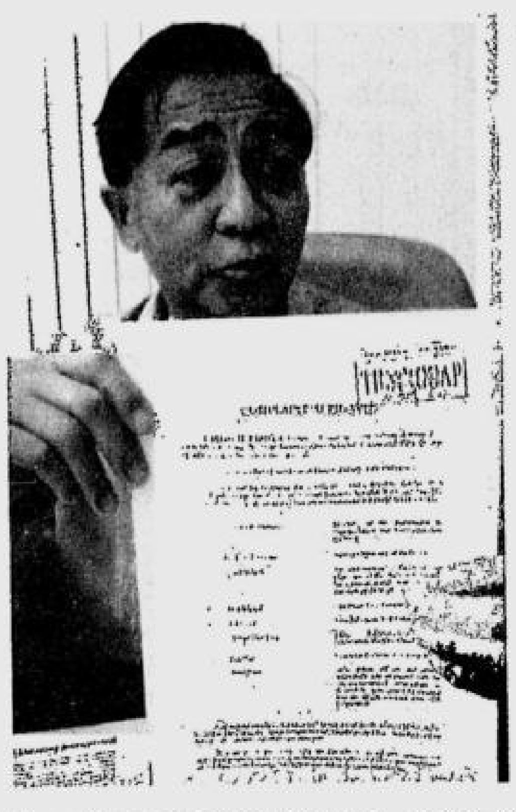
The DOTC would rather have the country incurring a $329-million loan from China for the NBN, "even though Malacañang and DOTC records would show that there were several private companies volunteering to undertake the project at no cost to our government," he said.

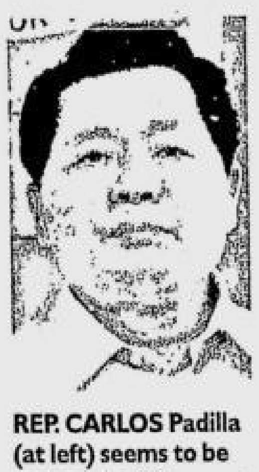
Timeline

The congressman gave the following narration in support of the charges:

- In September 2006, ZTE submitted an "unsolicited proposal" to the Commission on Information and Communications Technology (CICT). The proposal called for a government-to-government loan to fund the construction of the NBN.

When completed, the project is to be turned over to the DOTC for its operation and maintenance, according to the ZTE proposal.





REP. CARLOS Padilla (at left) seems to be saying it's all in here—the corruption charges he filed against Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza (above) and other DOTC officials and the officers of China's ZTE Corp. JOAN BONDOC

- Around the same period, AHI "also expressed intention to undertake the development of the NBN without any fund appropriation and guarantee from the national government." It proposed a system it then dubbed as the "Orion Network."
- On Oct. 17, 2006, then Secretary Romulo Neri of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) wrote AHI a letter conveying his support for the Orion Network. Padilla attached a copy of Neri's letter to the complaint.
- About a month later, a meeting between President Macapagal-Arroyo and the Neda Cabinet cluster "discussed the necessity for a privately funded government broadband network."

The officials in that meeting also "expressed their unanimous view that the government connectivity and (info-tech) infrastructure should be developed at no cost, and with savings, to the national government."

AHI's unsolicited proposal

- On Dec. 5, 2006, AHI formally submitted to the DOTC its own unsolicited proposal for the NBN. The submitted materials included a feasibility study and identified AHI's partner in the project as Huawei, said to be the largest telecom equipment supplier in China and the second largest in the world.
- By Jan. 2 this year, the AHI proposal had reached the CICT for initial review and endorsement.
- On Jan. 4, the company also submitted to the DOTC a draft memorandum of agreement spelling out the respective obligations of the AHI and the government.
- On Jan. 8, AHI made a formal presentation of the Orion Network to the DOTC at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel. Exactly a month later, AHI's Richard Pratte e-mailed the DOTC to answer the latter's additional questions.

ZTE proposal

- On Feb. 26, Soneja asked AHI and ZTE to submit the "final version" of their respective proposals.

On the same day, ZTE submitted the "same proposal" it previously furnished the CICT but subject to revisions to integrate the Department of Education's Cyber Education Project. AHI, meanwhile, "deemed its earlier submissions as final."

- On Feb. 28, a technical working group (TWG) completed its evaluation of the two rival proposals, factoring in the CyberEd project.
- On March 6, the DOTC's bids and awards committee adopted the TWG's recommendations and forwarded these to the Neda.
- On March 18, AHI wrote to the DOTC "requesting compliance with the rules on unsolicited proposals under Republic Act No. 6957 (Build-Operate-Transfer Law) and its implementing rules and regulations.

Incomplete

- On March 26, the DOTC, through respondent Soneja, informed AHI that its proposal was "found incomplete" and that "the period to evaluate the proposal has not yet commenced."

At this point, Padilla remarked in the complaint, "Soneja made this representation despite the fact that AHI's proposal was already previously evaluated by the CICT and TWG as of Feb. 28."

"It would seem at this point that Soneja knew more about the approval of the ZTE-NBN deal with the government that he found excuses to reject the AHI's proposal."

- On April 3, AHI wrote the DOTC "taking exception to the finding that its proposal was incomplete" and noting that the agency "never informed (the company) of any deficiency or additional requirement."
- Seven days later, Soneja wrote AHI reiterating DOTC's findings that its proposal was incomplete and that its deficiencies have actually been relayed to the firm in previous meetings and consultations.

US ambassador

- On April 20, US Ambassador Kristie Kenney wrote Neri "expressing the US government's interest in the NBN" and asking the Philippine government to "take time to carefully review and consider the multiple expressions of interest that have been submitted, including those involving American companies."

"Kenney also manifested that in all government projects, there should be competition and transparency," the congressman said in his complaint.

Shocking

On the same day, however, Mendoza and Formoso were already in Hainan, China, to sign the NBN contract as "awarded" to ZTE.

"What is more shocking is that the signed contract with ZTE was supposedly lost by commercial attaché Emmanuel Ang the night after it was signed. Respondent Mendoza now refuses to disclose the other details of that agreement, which is plainly disadvantageous to the government," Padilla said. *With a report from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

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Who's to blame for Malapiat bloodbath?

By Desiree Caluza
Rizal, Kalinga

EMILIO TAYAAN, 65, WAS HAVING BREAKFAST WITH his wife Abok on June 25 when he heard gunfire in their community of Malapiat in Rizal, Kalinga. Bullets pierced their hut.

The blind Abok was hit in the legs and bled. Her husband ran outside and confronted the armed men whom he identified as policemen and soldiers.

"I ran outside after the firing stopped and asked them why they were shooting my house. I told them my wife was hit and needed to be taken to a hospital. The policemen did not answer my question, but they helped me take her to the hospital," Tayaan said.

Abok died before reaching the hospital in the capital of Tabuk. She was the only woman among the nine villagers—all members of Mabaca, Butbut and Ab-abaan tribes—who died during a clash with government troops securing a demolition team sent by the municipal government.

The policemen engaged the settlers in a gunfight that lasted about 10 hours. At least 10 lawmen were wounded.

The team was sent to demolish the houses of settlers on a disputed property at Sitio Malapiat, Barangay San Pascual, Rizal.

Overkill

Members of a fact-finding group from the Cordillera Human Rights Alliance and the Cordillera Peoples Alliance described the actions of the police and demolition team as an "overkill." They interviewed residents and local officials last month.

"What happened to the Malapiat residents was a clear case of human rights violation. In fact, it was an overkill. It was savage," said Joan Carling, national coordinator of the Indigenous Peoples Human Rights Watch.

Carling said the group was holding former Rizal Mayor Marcelo de la Cruz accountable for abusing his power when he ordered the demolition.

De la Cruz, who was leading the town then, said he would take full responsibility. "I will answer for it. But, of course, I deny that human rights violations took place," he said.

He said a group of farmers in the town was claiming the land known as the Madrigal Estate. They showed the local government titles to prove ownership.

Other farmers were having their titles processed, De la Cruz said.

Ambush

In November last year, the farmers filed a complaint with the municipal government and asked the local officials to drive away the illegal settlers, he said. The settlers came from 37 tribes in Kalinga and have claimed that the land belongs to their ancestors.

On Aug. 8, De la Cruz and his son, incumbent Mayor Chris Mark de la Cruz, survived an ambush by more than 20 men while on their way to Rizal after attending a hearing on the Malapiat case in Tabuk. At least 10 policemen and aides in their six-vehicle convoy were wounded, while one of the gunmen was killed.

Senior Supt. Severino Cruz, Kalinga police director, believed that the attack was an offshoot of the Malapiat case. He said police intelligence reports showed that the victims' relatives would retaliate after the demolition.

"This is very unfortunate. This is what we had feared before, that the violent demolition in Malapiat would also lead to a violent situation like this," Carling said.

De la Cruz said Chris Mark was among the volunteers of the demolition team, which was composed of village officials, town employees and representatives of nongovernment organizations. The volunteers were unarmed and carried only carpentry tools, he said, while the policemen and soldiers were the only ones armed.

The Malapiat residents said some of the volunteers had guns.

Carling said the fact-finding team found that four of the nine fatalities were between 60 and 81 years old. Some were sick and could not carry firearms, she said.

Their profile hardly showed that they were in combat because they were not armed, she said. They were left behind because they were afraid, she added.

But Cruz said the residents had prepared to fight the demolition crew. When the volunteers arrived in Sitio Malapiat, the place was quiet and there were no people around, he said.

Cruz said the two policemen who checked the area were shot.

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Bulosan in his native tongue

By Gabriel Cardinoza
Binalonan, Pangasinan

RESIDENTS OF BINALONAN, an Ilocano-speaking town in eastern Pangasinan, can now read in their native tongue the highly acclaimed novel of their famous town mate, Carlos Bulosan.

Thanks to Manuel Diaz, a local fiction writer, who translated Bulosan's "America is in the Heart" into Ilocano.

"Adda iti Puso ti Amerika" is now being serialized in Bannawag, a weekly vernacular magazine that circulates in the Ilocos region.

The novel, which was first published in 1946, describes Bulosan's boyhood in the Philippines, his voyage to America, and his years of hardship and despair as an itinerant laborer on that foreign land.

Bulosan was born in a village in Binalonan, then known as Mangusmana, and died in Seattle, Washington, on Sept. 11, 1956.

"I hope that my translation of Bulosan into Ilocano will trigger another translation of his other important works into the vernacular," Diaz said.

Bulosan's literary pieces since 1914 consisted of short stories, poems, plays and essays, which have been kept in seven boxes, one folder and 17 microfilm reels at the University of Washington Libraries in Seattle.

Since the writings are all in English, many Ilocanos may have never fully appreciated them, said Jaime Lucas, Diaz's colleague in the local chapter of the Gunglo dagiti Mannurat nga Ilokano (Association of Ilocano Writers).

"Some of us have not even seen Bulosan's book in English. So it's good that it's now being serialized in Bannawag that even the ordinary Ilocano can now appreciate the writings of Bulosan," Lucas said.

First time

Diaz, who is translating Bulosan's work for the first time, said what he had done was not easy.

"The novel was set in the 1930s and the ambiance was very different from what we have today. There were even words in the novel which are no longer applicable," Diaz said.

But Diaz said he hoped his work would not only help increase awareness among the Ilocanos about Bulosan but would make them become proud of him as well.

Bulosan is not known now, especially among students because his works are no longer included in the required readings in high school and college literature classes. "There has to be a rediscovery of Bulosan," Diaz said.

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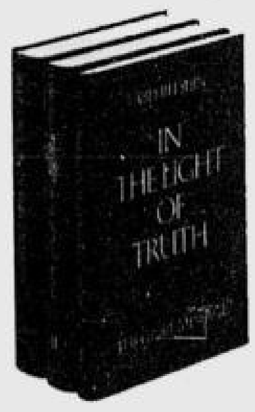

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Marine gets award a year after death in Sulu

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—THE government has finally recognized as a hero a Marine officer, who died in Sulu during clashes with the Abu Sayyaf in 2006.

President Macapagal-Arroyo conferred the Gold Cross Medal on the family of 2nd Lt. Ruben Barnuevo, more than one year after the officer died, during the National Heroes Day celebrations, which she led here on Monday.

Reward

Nenita Barnuevo, the officer's mother, accepted the medal and cash from the President.

"I am happy that my son's sacrifice is now being rewarded," she later told the INQUIRER.

Barnuevo said that before her son died, he had called her up and told her that the next battle against the Abu Sayyaf would be fierce.

Warning

"The day before his death, my son called me up to say that his next battle will be fierce and that I should be prepared to accept whatever happens to him," she recounted.

Barnuevo, who has another son in the military, said she knew about the dangers of soldiery. "I guess that is the life of a soldier," she said.

Aside from Barnuevo, SPO3 Basil Isad, who died fighting with the Abu Sayyaf in Jolo, received a posthumous award from the President.

Citations

Other soldiers received citations for their role against terror and criminality.

Speaking in Cebuano, Ms Arroyo said many soldiers were still in the battlefield or in the hospitals, who deserved the same honors. "I salute the fighting men and women who are the heroes for peace in Mindanao," she said.

Ms Arroyo ordered Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro to immediately draft an executive order that would authorize the increase of combat pay for soldiers.

Armed Forces Chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon said all soldiers, regardless of their place of assignments, would receive the increase in combat pay.

The benefit came amid the deaths of several soldiers during clashes with the Abu Sayyaf and members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in Basilan and Sulu.

She said she had directed the Department of Budget and Management to use the savings from the AFP modernization fund, or P1.28 billion, for the increase.

"I have asked the Department of Budget and Management to allot P145 million a year for additional combat pay for our soldiers in the battlefield," Ms Arroyo said.

She announced that part of the military's capability upgrade program was the recent purchase of 3,000 sets of new helmets for soldiers. *Ma. Cecilia Rodriguez, Inquirer Mindanao*

Gov't, MILF agree in secret KL meet to keep truce monitors

COTABATO CITY—A MALAYSIAN-led team got a fresh mandate as ceasefire observers as Philippine government and Moro rebel negotiators met secretly at the Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur on Monday.

The two sides also "lightly discussed" territorial issues, an official of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) said.

Malacañang had earlier called off the talks scheduled for Aug. 22-24.

The MILF said it was surprised by the abrupt cancellation as negotiators were preparing to leave for Kuala Lumpur at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

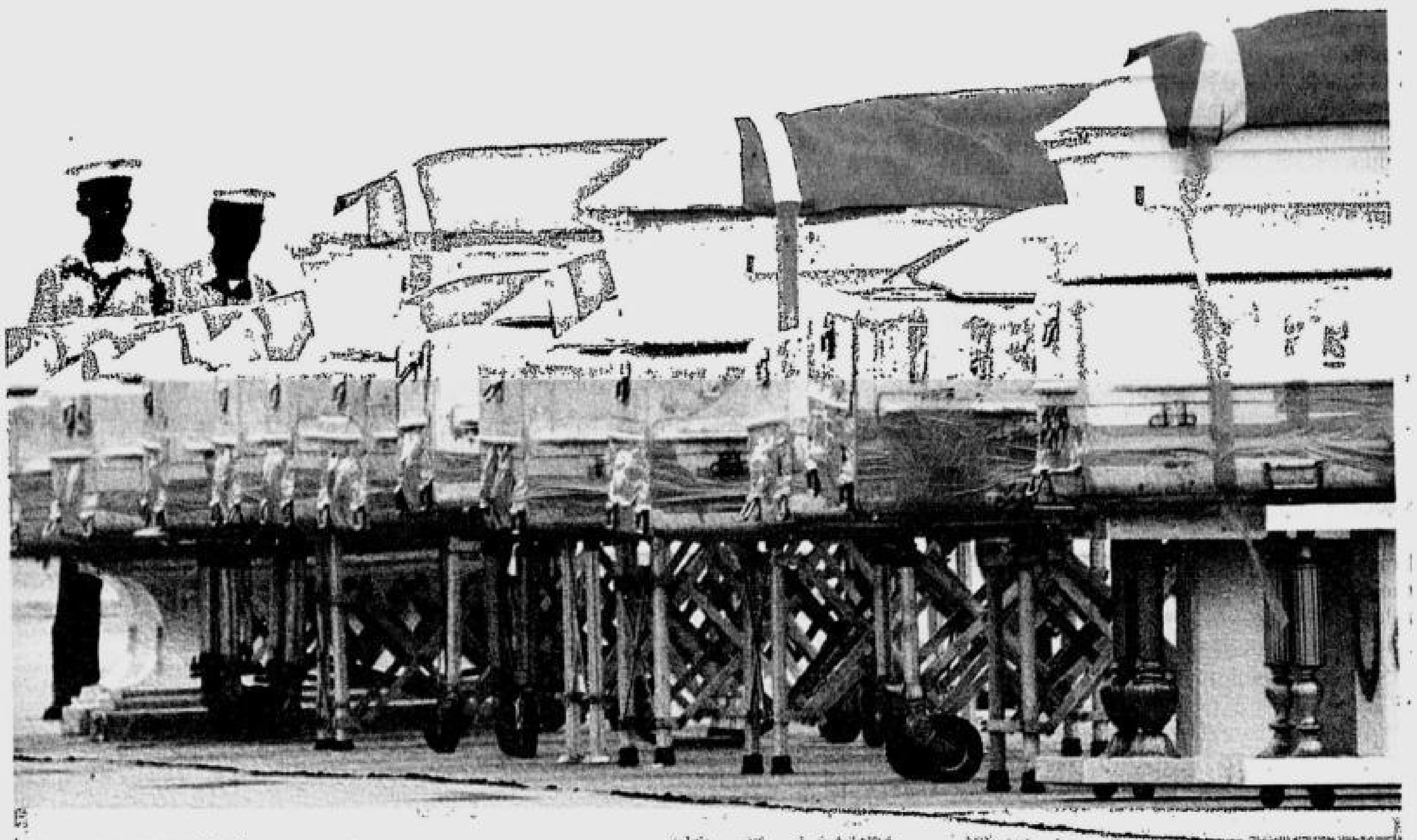
Ghadzali Jaafar, MILF political affairs chief, yesterday confirmed that the meeting pushed through on Monday. But he could not say why it was kept under wraps.

"The most important thing is that we agreed to extend the tour of duty of the IMT, which was set to expire on Friday," he said.

The IMT (International Monitoring Team), a creation of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, is a 60-member body that oversees the implementation of the ceasefire agreement between the government and the MILF.

Among the team's member-countries, only Japan does not belong to the OIC.

"The IMT has played a big role in our efforts to sustain the gains of the 10-year-old peace process. Losing it is like putting an end to the process," Jaafar said.



MARINES stand next to the flag-draped coffins of 14 comrades killed in a July 10 ambush by Moro guerrillas in Basilan during funeral honors at the Villamor Air Base. AP

The negotiators, who met in Cyberjaya in Selangor, Malaysia, included retired Gen. Rodolfo Garcia, Prof. Rudy Rodil, Camilo Montessa and Mark Ryan Sullivan for the government side. The MILF was represented by Mohagher Iqbal, Michael Mastura, Maulana Bobby Alonto and Mike Pasigan.

"They mainly discussed the extension of the tour of duty of IMT although they talked about some issues," Jaafar said.

He said the negotiators also agreed to expand the coverage of the IMT to Basilan, Palawan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

Jaafar said the panels "lightly touched on the most contentious issue of ancestral domain."

"The discussion on ancestral domain issue was very cordial but obviously disagreements prevailed and both agreed to fine-tune their positions in preparation for the next formal peace talks," he said.

The issue on ancestral domain was seen as a major stumbling block to the signing of a peace agreement between the rebels and the government.

The MILF wants to include 1,000 villages in the Bangsamoro Juridical Entity without preconditions, but the government said it could only allow about 600 villages.

The government also said the composition of the BJE would depend on the outcome of a plebiscite.

In a joint statement, government and guerrilla negotiators said the monitoring team had made a "substantial contribution" in stabilizing the situation in Mindanao Region, as well as in boosting international confidence in the peace process.

The truce between government forces and the MILF, a 12,000-strong separatist group, was agreed upon three years ago.

After Monday's meeting, the two sides "reached a consensus to request Malaysia, Brunei, Libya and Japan to extend the tour of duty of their respective contingents ... for another 12 months ending August 2008."

The ongoing military offensive is centered in Basilan and on the island of Jolo in Sulu.

The statement said the next round of talks would look at whether to expand the truce monitoring team to include other countries. *Edwin Fernandez and Jeoffrey Maitem, Inquirer Mindanao with AFP report*

Bulacan folk ask GMA to stop mining in Biak-na-Bato

SAN MIGUEL, BULACAN—PEOPLE living at the foot of the Biak-na-Bato mountains in this town have asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to declare the mountains a protected area to stop marble quarrying and mining there.

Victorino Villela, president of the Buklod Unlad ng Dalitang Umaasa sa Kabundukan (Bundok) Inc., said parts of Biak-na-Bato had been declared a mineral reservation and the change in status could only be the way to save residents from a possible catastrophe as a result of quarrying and mining in the mountains.

He said the activities might lead to soil erosion and landslides, especially during heavy rainfall and typhoons, that could displace or hurt the 500 residents in the area.

Quarry trucks and equipment also damage roads leading to their villages, he said.

Biak-na-Bato was declared a national park by then President Manuel Quezon on Nov. 16, 1937 through Proclamation No. 223. It covers 2,117 hectares in the villages of Kalawakan and Talbak in Doña Remedios Trinidad town and the villages of Biak-na-Bato and Sibul in San Miguel.

In 1970, then President Ferdinand Marcos issued an order guiding mineral prospecting and exploitation in government reservations.

Through Proclamation No. 401, issued on April 11, 1989, by then President Corazon Aquino, the national government redefined the boundaries of the Biak-na-Bato National Park.

The proclamation set aside 952 hectares as mineral reservation, 938 ha as watershed reservation, and 480 ha as forest reserve.

Villela said his group would start gathering signatures in Bulacan to support the clamor to declare Biak-na-Bato a protected area.

Bundok's initiative was the latest among the activities that were launched to stop mining and quarrying at Biak-na-Bato.

Earlier, the Dangal ng Bulacan Foundation Inc. and multisectoral groups in Bulacan mounted signature campaigns to ask Ms Arroyo to stop marble quarrying at Biak-na-Bato. *Carmela Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon*

Ombudsman to hire more men for Visayas offices, says exec

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—THE OFFICE OF the Ombudsman is hiring more personnel for its offices in the Visayas to strengthen its anti-graft campaign.

Newly appointed Deputy Ombudsman for the Visayas Pelagio Apostol said he would increase the number of employees in the Western Visayas office in Iloilo from nine to 50, the minimum required for a regional unit.

Apostol said the Ombudsman-Visayas also planned to establish a regional office in Eastern Visayas, to be located either in Tacloban City or in Palo town in Leyte.

"We are giving more emphasis on public assistance to enhance graft prevention," he said in an interview.

Annual convention

Apostol, a native of Bugasong town in Antique, was assigned to the central office of the Ombudsman before he was appointed Deputy Ombudsman-Visayas on Aug 22. He was here as one of the key speakers of the three-day Visayas-wide annual convention of Resident Ombudsmen, which ended Friday.

Apostol said he would ensure the regular tracking of cases, including those filed in regular courts, through a monthly monitoring report. This will help speed up the investigation and prosecution of cases.

He said he would come up with projects and campaigns to improve the integrity and image of the office as an independent agency, but at the same time "not obstruct the programs and projects of local government units."

SCTEx delay worsens as Japan firm seeks new extension

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CLARK FREEPORT—THE NATIONAL flagship project Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEx) has suffered another deadline snag.

This happened as Hazama-Taisei-Nippon Steel Joint Venture (HTN) sought a 54-day extension, beginning Aug. 18, to finish the 44-kilometer Pampanga-Tarlac portion of the 94-km highway, according to an INQUIRER source in Malacañang.

HTN, according to its contract, is supposed to finish that segment by Aug. 30. The entire road, worth P21 billion, is being built on a loan from the Japanese government.

The board of directors of the Bases Conversion Development Authority, the SCTEx's proponent, met on Tuesday to tackle the extra time asked by HTN, a BCDA source said.

The Palace source did not say how much money the HTN was claiming in its "arbitration case" against the BCDA. Another source said it amounted to about P500 million to cover the cost of accelerating the works.

HTN project Kunio Kimata on Tuesday did not answer the INQUIRER's calls seeking confirmation on the claims for deadline extension and compensation.

BCDA president Narciso Abaya did not reply to INQUIRER's calls and text messages sent to his mobile phone.

Pacific Consultants International-Katahira and Engineers International-Nippon Koei Ltd. (PCI-KEI-NK), the project's consultant, has reportedly ruled that HTN was "entitled" to the extension because of the "late delivery of right-of-way" at the spur road junction of the North Luzon Expressway.

That pertained to some 800 square meters of land in Mabalacat, Pampanga, which the BCDA claimed through an expropriation case against landowners who were selling that property at 10 times the old rate of P1,000 per square meter.

The source said the Pampanga-Tarlac side was over 95-percent complete as of last week, and the remaining works involved the correcting of defects and repair of damages from recent typhoons.

A Japanese engineer had sent text messages to the INQUIRER as early as May to report about the "improper design of slope protection."

The engineer said "consultant engineers hesitated to change [the design] because it [would] affect [the] completion date [and the project would be] delayed for six to eight months."

The same source later said they were "instructed to repair damaged area in [an] improper manner [by] just covering [it] with soil without compaction."

"[The] consultant's concern [is] only [to complete it] on time. We don't like to sacrifice quality," he said.

HTN's claim came after it withdrew its "Claim for Extension of Time No. 2" dated March 29.

Tetsuro Marui, Hazama general manager for international division, flew in from Tokyo to assure the BCDA that the consortium's part would be finished on time, Abaya had said in a statement on April 16.

SCTEx's other contractor, Kajima-Obayashi-JFE Engineering and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd. Joint Venture (KOJM), was allowed by President Macapagal-Arroyo in July to get a four-month extension up to March 2008 at no direct cost to the Philippine government.

Secretary Edgardo Pamintuan, chair of the Subic-Clark Alliance for Development Council, said he recommended the extension since Philippine agencies were equally liable for the delay in KOJM's works.

However, an official involved in projects in Subic and Clark free ports assailed the government for constantly adjusting the completion dates and not charging the Japanese contractors liquidated damages at a cost of P5.1 million for every day of delay.

Salonga, church leaders ask SC to free pastor

From page A1

A PLEA FOR FREEDOM: CHR doctor documents marks of alleged torture on the hands and arms of Pastor Berlin Guerrero.

SALONGA: Urgent need to intervene.

hands of policemen, the lack of evidence linking him to the 15-year-old murder case and the failure to examine the witness and complainant before the arrest warrant was issued required the dropping of the charge.

They also asked the high court for a temporary restraining order to stop the proceedings in the criminal case.

Named respondent was Judge Matias Garcia II of the Bacoor Regional Trial Court, who denied on Aug. 2 Guerrero's motion seeking his release.

Guerrero was abducted on May 27 after attending the anniversary celebration of the UCCP church in Biñan, Laguna.

He was blindfolded and later interrogated. Police tortured him by covering his head with a plastic bag to deprive him of oxygen, and by hitting him with a plastic bottle of water to minimize bruising.

Later, authorities said they arrested him because of an outstanding 1992 warrant for a murder case.

After almost a day of being held incommunicado, Guerrero called up his wife and told her that he was being held at the Cavite police headquarters in Camp Pantaleon Garcia in Imus, Cavite.

He is currently detained at the provincial jail in Trece Martires, Cavite.

Outrage

"The case of Pastor Guerrero is so brazen, so atrocious it has awakened the consciousness of church people," Kilosbayan lawyer Emilio Capulong said in a press conference.

Capulong said Salonga, who represented Kilosbayan and Bantay Katarungan Foundations, and the church leaders decided to come together because of their outrage over Guerrero's plight.

Mylene, Guerrero's wife, wondered how many more would suffer the same fate as her husband. She called for an end to violence and human rights violations.

The Church leaders who joined Guerrero in his petition were Eliezer Pascua, UCCP general secretary; Bishop Deogracias Iñiguez, Ecumenical Bishops Forum cochair, and Bishop Solito Toquero; Sharon Duremdes, National Council of Churches in the Philippines general secretary; and Romeo del Rosario, president of the Union Theological Seminary.

Need for intervention

The petitioners said they went to the high court without seeking reconsideration of Garcia's order because of the very urgent need for intervention. They said any delay would aggravate the pastor's physical condition.

Pascua said Guerrero's supporters were still awaiting the release of the Philippine National Police (PNP) report on the members of the police's Naval Intelligence Services Force who tortured the pastor.

Pascua said PNP Director General Oscar Calderon had told the petitioners he would conduct a probe and let them know of the results.

Accused of being CPP official

In a statement emailed to media organizations after his "arrest," Guerrero said he was accused of being the secretary of the provincial committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines in Cavite.

He said his torturers opened his computer and forced him to give the password, got his e-mail password, erased all of his church, school and personal files, and replaced it with documents that belonged to the underground Left.

Lack of probable cause

In the petition, the groups said there was a lack of probable cause to charge Guerrero for the 1990 murder of Noli Yatco, and questioned Garcia's alleged disregard of the facts on record and his denial of the pastor's motion for his release from detention.

The petitioners pointed out that during the preliminary investigation, Judge Myrna Verano stated that without the testimony and examination of eyewitness Fernando Hinto, there would be nothing to link the pastor to the alleged murder.

Verano, however, still allowed the filing of the murder charge, the petitioners said.

They cited the June 2007 Supreme Court ruling in which it ordered Department of Justice prosecutors to withdraw the rebellion charges against five militant lawmakers ("Batasan Five") and four civilians after it found that the preliminary investigation had been questionable.

The high court said that preliminary investigations must be conducted properly in order to spare the respondents from undergoing an unnecessary trial.

"Whereupon, in the present case, respondent judge seriously erred and gravely abused his discretion in issuing the assailed order—in ignoring what patently appears on record—in failing to dismiss the case against petitioner Pastor Berlin Guerrero for a total lack of probable cause—and in thereby denying his release from illegal confinement," they said.

The petitioners also said that based on the records, there was no basis for the arrest warrant subsequently issued against Guerrero by Judge Edelwina Pastoral.

They said the warrant was only issued as a matter of course, with Pastoral not even conducting the required personal examination of complainant Ederlinda Yatco and witness Fernando Hinto, which they said was a violation of Guerrero's constitutional right to due process.

"From the records, the warrant of arrest was issued by Judge Pastoral without any factual or legal basis which should follow a judicial determination of probable cause," they said.

The torture that Guerrero underwent violated his human rights but was ignored by Garcia when he denied the pastor's motion for his release, according to the petitioners.

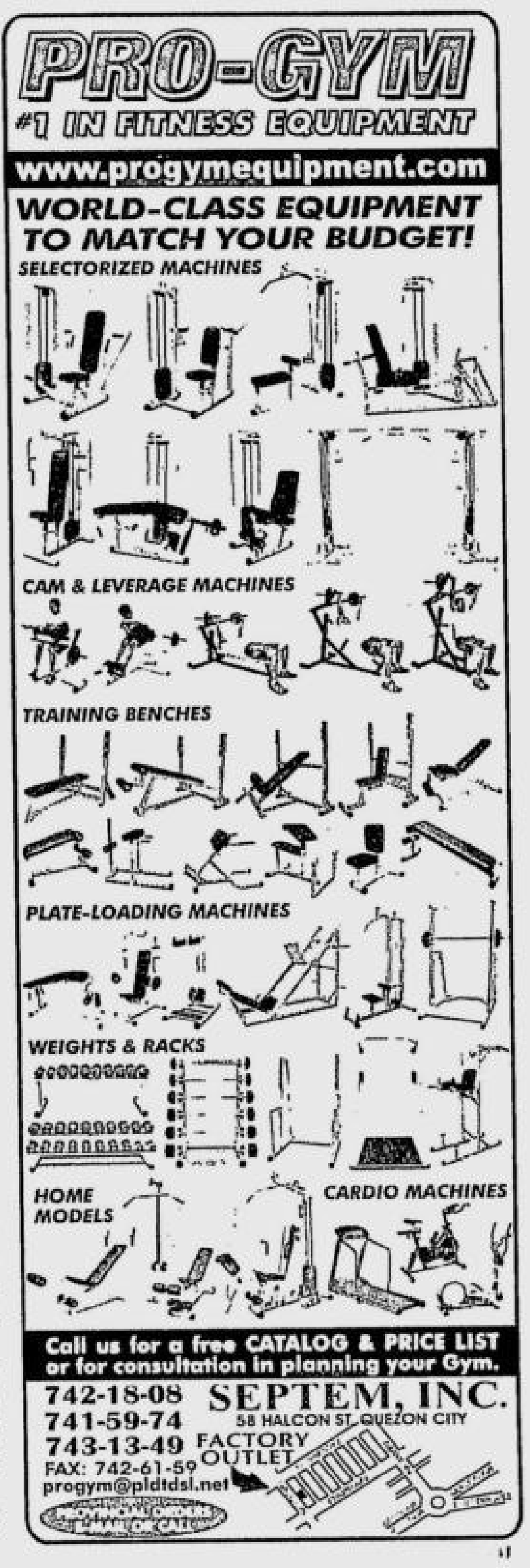
Threatened with execution

"His 'arresting officers'—or more accurately, his kidnappers—made the 'arrest' without showing said petitioner the warrant of arrest ... was interrogated without counsel ... was blindfolded ... was tortured ... was threatened with summary execution ... was intimidated with horrifying harm that would befall his family," they said.

The petitioners also questioned the timing of his arrest, saying that from the time the warrant was issued, Guerrero was a public figure in Cavite and was even going in and out of the country.

They also said that throughout his interrogation and torture, Guerrero was not questioned about the murder or informed of the accusation against him.

Neither was Guerrero notified of the criminal complaint against him supposedly filed in 1991 and the subsequent filing of the murder charge. Nor was he heard during the preliminary investigation.



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UST Publishing House Launches Book Titles for 2007

In connection with the celebration of the *Manila International Book Fair* 2007 set from August 29 to September 2, 2007 at the World Trade Training Center in Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City, the UST Publishing House shall hold the 1st part of its *2007 Book Launching* on August 30, 3 pm, at the Makati Skyline Restaurant, World Trade Training Center. Twenty five new titles from various fields and disciplines, including languages, literature, theology, and alternative medicine, industrial chemistry, and a coffee table book will be launched. Secretary General Rev. Fr. Isidro C. Abaño, O.P., and Publishing Director Jocelyn T. Calubayan will grace the occasion to present the first copies of the books to the authors, who are also expected to attend. The 2nd part of the book launching is set sometime in early February of 2008. As part of the University's quadricentennial anniversary activities in 2011, the UST Publishing House is producing for publication 400 books from 2001 to 2011, and releases the following new titles for 2007:

THEOLOGY WEEK 2005 – EUCHARIST WITH MARY is a compilation of the proceedings that manifests studies centering on Mary and the Eucharist. ***THEOLOGY WEEK 2006 – VATICAN II: 40 YEARS AFTER*** addresses itself to the theological developments that have occurred since 1965, the closing of the council's *agglornamento*. Both books were edited by Jose Antonio Aureada, O.P. and Richard Ang, O.P.

Hermogenes E. Bacareza comes up with a two-volume book that discusses the formidable, albeit unpopular, ties between Germany and the Philippines in ***PHILIPPINE-GERMAN RELATIONS: A MODERN HISTORY (1834-2006) VOLS. 1 AND 2.***

LEGAL WRITING by Judge Alicia G. Decano is a work that lectures on the improvement of law students' and lawyers' writing. The legal articles with recent decided cases can be of great help to legal practitioners, prosecutors, public attorneys and judges.

PASSION FOR CATECHESIS is a collection of articles and talks by Archbishop Leonardo Legaspi. The book illumines the author's more than twenty years of dedication to the catechetical ministry both at the national and diocesan levels.

Boy Villasanta allows us to take an inside look at the "bodies," souls and shadows of the gods and goddesses of film, TV, radio, theater and other forms of art in his opus ***EXPOSE, PERYODISMONG PAMPELIKULA SA PILIPINAS.***

Agay Llanera's ***SOL - A LEGEND ABOUT THE SUN*** is a tale translated to Filipino by Susan de Guzman and illustrated by Farley del Rosario. It is a story of an ardent buy, a vain sun, and a spurned moon.

Rachy Cuna turns up with a coffee table book on flowers and their composition and arrangement called ***ADORNMENTS***. This book transforms flowers from being mere objects of ornamentation to magnificent pieces of artwork.

Rev. Fr. Leonardo Legaspi, Archbishop of Caceres, chronicles the talks and homilies that he delivered to priests and compiles them in ***HEART TO HEART – JOURNEYING WITH THE PRIESTS IN PRAYERFUL REFLECTION.***

THE BEST PR PROGRAMS AND TOOLS - SECOND EDITION, edited by Bong Osorio, provides the PR industry with a new selection of the winning entries to the IABC Gold Quill Philippines Awards. This is useful to practitioners, client companies, teachers, students, and business managers.

¡HOLA AMIGOS! by Josefina Gonzalez, Luningning Ferrer and Miguela Miguel, addresses common problems students encounter in the study of the Spanish language. Functional and teeming with drills and designed exercises, this manual is a viable tool for every Spanish language enthusiast.

ANG BATANG MARAMING BAWAL penned by Fernando Rosal Gonzalez is the winning story of CANVAS' 2nd Annual Romeo Forbes Children's Storywriting Competition which details a timely tale of innocent hope and imagination.

DISSONANT UMBRELLAS – NOTES TOWARD A GESAMTKUNSTWERK is the much awaited release of the National Book awardee and wonder boy of Philippine poetry, Angelo V. Suarez. This poetry collection draws much of its content from contemporary trends in literature, pop culture, and social reality.

DREAMS AND RIVERS is a collaborative effort of Fr. Philip Bersabe and Jonathan Villar, who wrote poems dealing with the Catholic faith, the fascinating Bicol culture, and the creative process of writing poems laced with ripples of wit, humor, and cynicism.

KOMPOSO NI DANDANSOY by Genevieve Asenjo is a benefaction of the layered texture she has imbibed from her strong Hiligaynon heritage. This collection of stories of various themes including isolation, migration, and diaspora, are written in both Hiligaynon and Filipino languages.

BUHAY – PINOY: MGA PILING INTERBYU'T ARTIKULO is a collection of interviews and articles by Fanny Garcia that spans a wide range of subjects and theses; from Jaime Cardinal Sin to Mariang Hilot, from Hospicio De San Jose orphans to Sapang Palay farmers.

INDUSTRIAL CHEMICAL PROCESSES BOOK 2 is follow-up of Dr. Cecilia Bayquen's cornerstone on Industrial Chemistry. Very few books on chemical processes are available in the Philippines and are mostly published by foreign authors so this appends as a major contribution in practice of Chemistry in Philippine Industry.

Playwright Glenn Sevilla Mas comes up with ***CHILDREN OF THE SEA AND IN THE LAND OF THE GIANTS***, providing Philippine literature with a strong voice coming from the geographical beauty and ancient culture of Antique.

Co-published by the Instituto Cervantes, ***IF A FILIPINO WRITER READS QUIJOTE*** is an assemblage of lectures of Alfred Yuson, Vicente Groyon, and National Artist F. Sionil Jose, representing new readings of this four centenary classic – reckoned as the world's greatest novel by many critics and book lovers.

LAHI NI ADAN by Nonon Carandang is the fashioning rejoinder to his first book, ***ANGKAN NI EBA***. While the former explores the world of women and their trials and triumphs, the latter evinces the institutionalization of masculinity and the male as the bedrock structure that defines power and perception.

THE TAGALOG REGION: LEXICON OF THE LANGUAGE AND DIALECTS by Commissioner Fe Aldave Yap is a comprehensive reference for language researchers and lexicon enthusiasts who wish to deepen their knowledge on the semantics of the languages and dialects of the Tagalog region.

Jose Victor Torres's book ***IN TRANSITION: THE UST DURING THE AMERICAN COLONIAL PERIOD*** chronicles the changes that occurred in the UST during the first 37 years (1898-1935) of American colonial rule which affected the Philippine educational system.

LIVING WITH NATURE IN OUR TIMES by Abercio V. Rotor is a sequel to the Gintong Aklat Awardee ***THE LIVING WITH NATURE HANDBOOK***. This is a collection of articles from the lessons on *Paaralang Bayan sa Himpapawid* and brings to the grassroots functional knowledge that aims to enlighten the masses about the benefits and conservation of nature.

LATAY SA ISIPAN' edited by Cirilo Bautista, is a stirring anthology represented by the sprouting new and polyvalent voices in Philippine poetry.

UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS
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THE TRIUMPHANT Madrigal Singers pose with the prize at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. PABLO TARIMAN

Madrigal Singers return with choral grand prize

By Tarra Quismundo

THE PHILIPPINE MADRIGAL Singers displayed their winning form when they came home with the top prize in this year's European Grand Prix for Choral Singing, considered the world's choral Olympics.

On their arrival at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport yesterday, the 23-member chorale gave in to requests from the public, singing Gary Granada's "Tagumpay Nating Lahat" which seemed to capture what they felt about their historic victory:

"*At ang aking tagumpay/ Tagumpay ng aking lahi/ Tagumpay ng aking lipi/ Ang tanging minimithi at hinahangad/ Hangad ko'y tagumpay nating lahat* (And my victory is the victory of my race/ The victory of my lineage/ All that I desire and aspire for/ I aspire for the victory of us all)."

The impromptu performance by the group, composed mostly of music students and alumni of the University of the Philippines, momentarily suspended activity at the immigration queue as tourists, business travelers and *balikbayans* stopped to admire their singing.

Their stirring and flawless harmony showed just why the group outshone four other champion chorales from Cuba, Hungary, Russia and Taiwan during the competition held in Arezzo, Italy.

Groups from these countries qualified for the European tilt by winning preliminaries in the cities of Tolosa, Spain; Debrecen, Hungary; and Gorizia and Arezzo in Italy.

'Madz'

The "Madz," as the Madrigal Singers are informally known, now has the distinction of being the first and only choral group to have won the competition twice, having first taken the title in 1997.

"Like all Philippine choirs, whenever we perform abroad, we always work hard, we always prepare well for those competitions and at the end, we try to sing all our songs with the deepest emotion, expression. As they say, we sing from the heart," said choir master Mark Anthony Carpio.

The 44-year-old Madrigal Singers qualified for one of the world's most prestigious chorale contests by emerging as the champion by beating the qualifiers in Tours, France, last year, Carpio said.

He said that those who competed in Tours were champions in earlier qualifying rounds.

"So we can say, this is the battle of champions, of the best," said Carpio.

Madz took the prize via a 20-minute repertoire which included an arrangement of the Lord's Prayer in Latin by Filipino artist John Pamintuan, the Maguindanao children's song "Kaisa-isa Nyan," a French madrigal, a German art song and a contemporary piece from the United States.

The group, established in 1963 by its founder National Artist for Music Andrea Veneracion, performs in the Renaissance madrigal tradition of singing in a semi-circle.

OFW rooters

Leo Leal, a Madz tenor since 2001, said Veneracion remains the group's inspiration. "We believe as she did that the Philippines can be united through song," he said.

Some Italian-based Filipinos, among them migrant workers, turned up at Arezzo's Church of Sta. Maria della Pieve on Aug. 26 to cheer for Madz.

Filipinos from around Europe also showed up in Madz concerts in key cities during the three-month concert tour that preceded the Arezzo competition.

"They timed their tour in such a way that the culmination was this competition. Since they left, we have all been praying for a favorable result," said Fernando Josef, vice president and artistic director of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, where the singers are resident artists.

Josef believes Madz's success owes to a combination of good heart and artistry.

"They're actually setting an example not only in terms of artistic excellence, but also in terms of good values. I think God blesses them because ... all of them exude goodness. And goodness and art are the best partners," he said.

"When you are good and you have a kind heart, it shows in art form. Your good intentions, your good values come out in your song, in your music," Josef said.

Lifting of 'premature marriage' ban sought

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SEN. RICHARD GORDON HAS filed a bill repealing the crime of premature marriage.

The bill seeks to amend Article 351 of the Revised Penal Code which prohibits widows from marrying within 301 days after the death of her husband or before giving birth if pregnant at the time of husband's death. Article 351 also prohibits newly separated wives from marrying within 301 days after a legal separation. The penalty is set at a maximum of P500 and jail time of one month to six months.

"Given the available technology and conveniences of the present time where the issue of paternity and filiation may easily be resolved, the crime of premature marriage is no longer relevant. In the Family Code, there are no more restrictions for a widow or a woman from an annulled or dissolved marriage to marry again relative to the matter of paternity and filiation," said Gordon in his explanatory note to Senate Bill 290.

With the emergence of DNA technology, he said there would be no more confusion on the paternity or filiation on the child being carried by the woman.

Gordon also noted that according to the Family Code, any child born to a widow or separated woman 180 days after finding a new partner would be automatically considered a product of the previous marriage.

"As civil law has recognized the contracting of a subsequent marriage by a woman within 300 days from the termination of the former marriage, criminal law should likewise be updated and the crime of premature marriage should be repealed," Gordon said.

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RESIDENTS watch as a huge blaze destroys an estimated 50 houses in Barangay Commonwealth, Quezon City. RAFFY LERMA

Fires hit Quezon City, Taguig; P10 million lost

By Jeannette I. Andrade

FIRES BROKE OUT YESTERDAY in Quezon City and Taguig, leaving some 100 families homeless and damaging at least P10 million worth of goods and property.

Reports from the QC Fire District said that the fire burned down 50 houses, affecting 100 families, in Purok 14, Litex Road, Ibaba, Barangay Commonwealth, at 3:45 a.m. yesterday. It was put out nearly three hours later.

A resident identified as Adela Mercado suffered second-degree burns on her arms when she went inside her burning house to retrieve some of her possessions.

In Taguig City, a fire hit the Producers Market at the FTI complex in Western Bicutan and destroyed nearly 80 percent or over 50 stalls inside the establishment.

The fire reportedly began at 1:35 p.m. and was finally placed under control at 3:21 p.m.

Chief Insp. Sammy Tadeo of the Taguig City fire station said around P10-million worth of goods and property were damaged. Investigators said they were still trying to determine how the fires started.

UP stude's death a mystery

'Public administration senior could be hazing victim'

By Jeannette I. Andrade

MYSTERY SHROUDS THE death of a 20-year-old graduating student of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, who was rushed to a hospital after midnight Monday where he was declared dead on arrival.

Hours later, the mother of Chris Anthony Mendez, a public administration student who was the representative of his college—the National College of Public Administration and Governance (NCPAG)—to the UP Student Council, said she received a phone call from someone who identified herself as her son's landlady.

Cristina, who lives in Tiaong, Quezon province, initially said she thought that someone was playing a prank on her. According to the caller, Mendez had died after he was brought to the Veterans Memorial Hospital and his body was at the St. Peter's Memorial Chapels on Quezon Avenue.

When she arrived at the funeral home yesterday morning, Cristina saw her son with bruises all over his body, particularly on the back of his arms and thighs.

An official of the NCPAG, who requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to media, told the INQUIRER that they suspected Mendez was a victim of hazing.

According to the statement of Jonathan Garduce, the guard on duty when the victim was brought to the hospital, Mendez was taken to the facility at 1:08 a.m. Monday by a man who introduced himself as Dr. Francisco Cruz. Cruz was on board a white Toyota Innova with license plate ZXB 393. He was accompanied by people riding in two other vehicles: a Nissan Trooper (WGL 515) and an Isuzu van (XAS 548).

According to the guard, Cruz and his companions left hurriedly after giving the hospital staff information about Mendez who looked pale and unresponsive.

A doctor who examined the victim declared him dead several minutes later and his body was taken to the funeral home at around 4 a.m.

Pedro Panopio, a relative of the victim, said they agreed to have Mendez's body autopsied to determine the cause of his death. They would then bring his body home to Quezon, he added.

"Nobody is telling us anything. Even his classmates are not saying anything. The UP officials are telling us that they also have to wait for the result of the autopsy and the investigation," Panopio lamented. "We want justice for my nephew. He was a healthy boy and we cannot accept that he would just die like that without knowing what happened to him."

Mendez's classmates refused to talk to the INQUIRER and said they had been ordered by the vice chancellor, whom they did not identify, not to speak to media because "it would only blow the incident out of proportion."

The students told the INQUIRER that the vice chancellor and the UP administration would be issuing a statement today.

Dean Alex Brillantes of the NCPAG, meanwhile, assured the victim's family of the full support of the college and the UP community, adding that they all want to get to the bottom of the incident.

Shahana Abdulwahid, UP Student Council president, told the INQUIRER that Mendez was last seen alive on Saturday afternoon. After

UP STUDE'S/ A22

DID YOU KNOW

ON QUEZON Avenue, near the corner of Edsa, is a 1.5-hectare park in Quezon City dedicated to those who fought the 21-year Marcos dictatorship.

The landmark of the Bantayog ng mga Bayani is a 45-foot bronze monument of a defiant mother holding her fallen son, a creation of sculptor Eduardo Castrillo.

The park also has a granite Wall of Remembrance that contains the names of over 100 persons who fought for democracy, including former Senators Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. and Lorenzo Tañada. The names are selected annually by the Bantayog ng mga Bayani Foundation. The first 65 names were engraved in 1992.

Kate Pedroso, Inquirer Research

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Globe
BROADBAND

6 hurt as truck hits 3 vehicles on SLEx

By Julie M. Aurelio

SIX PEOPLE WERE RUSHED TO the Ospital ng Muntinlupa yesterday after a 40-foot trailer truck plowed into three vehicles near the Sucat exit of the South Luzon Expressway.

Orly Lanuza of the Philippine National Construction Corp., which operates the expressway, said the mishap occurred after the driver of the truck (TYG 544), lost control of his vehicle which crashed into the Toyota Corolla (TMF 771) in front of it.

The impact caused the truck to cross the opposite lane, where it collided with a van (WKS 272) and an Isuzu Elf truck (YGC 134).

Hospital staffers identified the injured as Felix Guimbana, 37, of Bacoor, Cavite; Nonito Rufino, 30, of Kamuning, Quezon City; Vicente Pelequito, 34; Albert Tiaquero, 22, of Caloocan City; Robert Pagasita, 42, of Kamias, Quezon City and Felipe Adrales, 45, of Mandaluyong City.

Adrales and Pagonta were reportedly in critical condition while the others suffered only minor injuries.

Hospital staffers said they did not know who among the victims were riding in what vehicle.

CHOOSING CAREER OPTIONS
Students of Abad Santos High School in Manila take the National Career Assessment Examination held yesterday. REM ZAMORA

Ex-Pasay City officials face extortion charge

By Julie M. Aurelio

TWO FORMER PASAY CITY OFficials have been charged with extortion after a businessman accused them and two other people of demanding P10,000 from him in exchange for issuing a business permit.

Charged in the office of Assistant Prosecutor Willy Chan were lawyer Santiago Quial, former city administrator; his brother, Jun Quial; lawyer Crisostomo Beltran, former chief of the Business Permits and Licensing Office (BPLO); and Mario Siocson, a messenger.

Of the four suspects, only Siocson is in the custody of the National Bureau of Investigation.

In his sworn statement, Sergio Lei, owner of two disco houses, said he applied for a business permit at Beltran's office last January.

However, Jun Quial allegedly told him that he must first pay Beltran P20,000 before the BPLO could approve his establishments' permits to operate. Santiago Quial was then working in Beltran's office.

Lei said that when he refused to give in to Jun's demand, his business permits were not approved.

In May 2007, the complainant agreed to pay Jun P10,000 for his business permits. He went to the NBI which then set up an entrapment operation.

Siocson was arrested on Aug. 13 after he received the money from Lei. Operations are ongoing to arrest Beltran and the Quial brothers.

Raps dropped vs 2 UP fratmen

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE QUEZON CITY PROSECUtor's Office has dismissed the frustrated murder charges filed against two University of the Philippines students by their schoolmate who accused them of attacking him last year.

Assistant City Prosecutor Bernardina Santos said that after a careful evaluation of the case, she did not find any probable cause to hold respondents Charles Cheng and Ferdie Ambrocio liable for frustrated murder.

"In the case at bar, although there were seven to 10 people who allegedly attacked the complainant, it is incredible that they had the intention of killing the complainant at 5 p.m. in a public place," Santos said in her resolution.

In his sworn statement, complainant Paul Martin Marasigan said a group of people "tried to kill him" at the Student Council Office of the National College of Public Administration and Governance (NCPAG) on the UP Diliman campus in July 2006.

Marasigan said Cheng, one of six suspects wearing bonnets, took off his head cover as he drove away with his alleged accomplices.

The complainant, who said he was a member of the Alpha Phi Beta fraternity, identified Ambrocio as the one who pointed at him and fraternity brother Ralph Degollacion before the other suspects began attacking them with pipes.

Marasigan said he tried to protect Degollacion and took all the suspects' blows.

Both Cheng and Ambrocio are members of Sigma Rho, another UP fraternity, according to the resolution.

The complainant, who also presented a medical certificate showing his injuries that incapacitated him for more than a week, said NCPAG Alumni Association Director Jaz Rey had seen respondent Cheng during the incident.

Cheng, like Ambrocio, has denied the allegations, saying he was never subjected to any disciplinary proceeding during his entire stay at the university.

MMDA to relocate riverside communities in San Juan City

By DJ Yap

SOME 3,000 FAMILIES THAT live alongside the San Juan River will be evicted and relocated to nearby provinces in the next few months, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority announced yesterday.

"Apart from the fact that these families have no right to occupy the waterways, our primordial concern here is to take them away from these areas that pose a danger to their lives," MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando said.

The official inspected the 9-kilometer stretch of the river on board a barge, along with San Juan City Mayor JV Ejercito and Quezon City Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista.

Fernando said it was "high time" for the government to take action on the encroachments along the river, which was now heavily silted and filled with garbage, causing floods in surrounding areas even during light rains. He added that the Inter-Agency Committee on the Relocation of Informal Settlers, composed of local government units, the National Housing Authority, the MMDA and non-governmental organizations, would be in charge of the project.

The agencies will pool their resources together for the relocation of the families to Calauan, Laguna and other possible sites, Fernando said.

The clearing of the river banks is expected to declog waterways and improve flood control measures in the cities of San Juan, Quezon, Mandaluyong and Manila, he added.

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Sidewalk vendors protest harassment from Manila cops

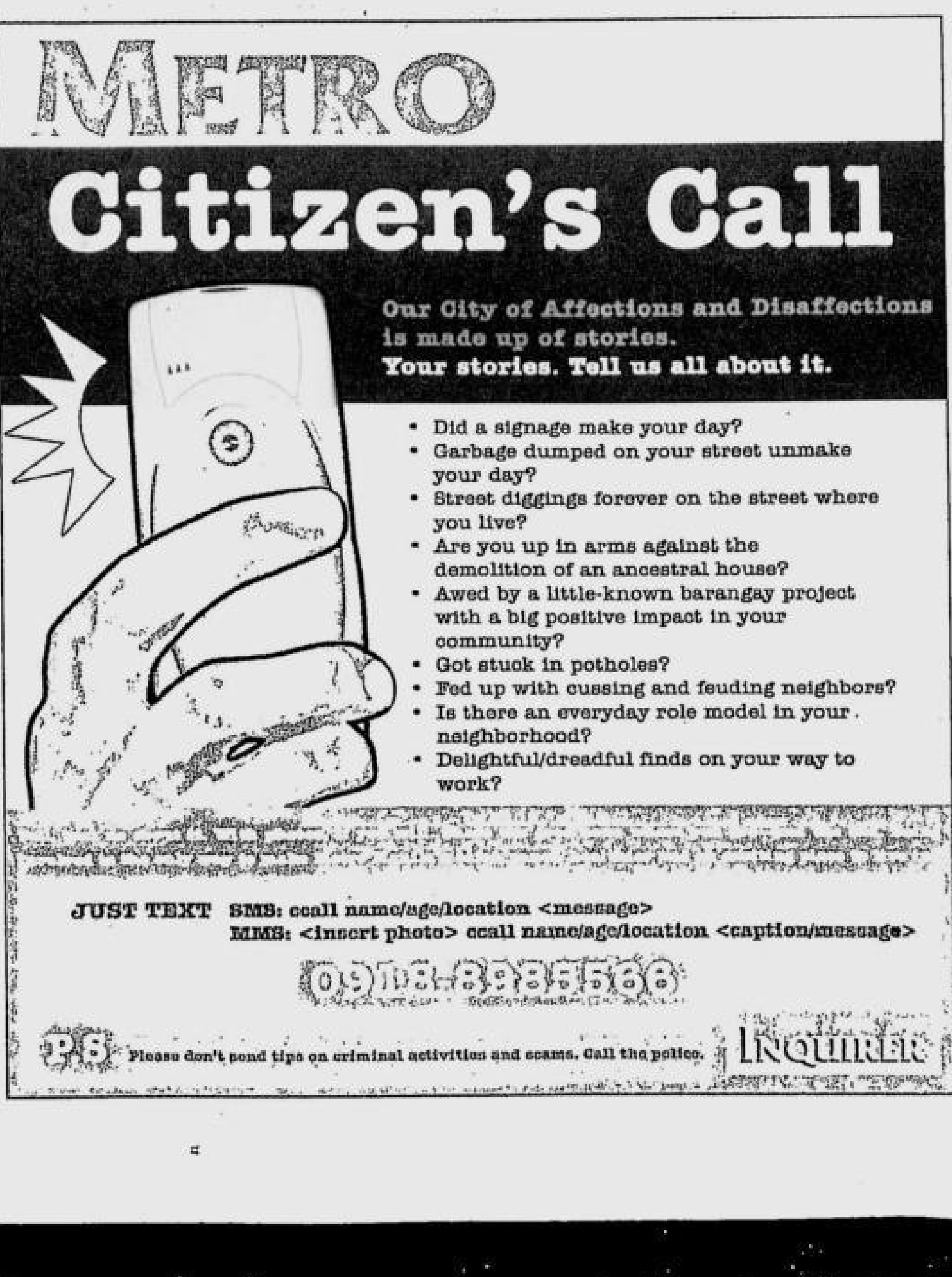
By Allison W. Lopez

ABOUT 80 VENDORS, INCLUDING those displaced from Baywalk, Carriedo Street and Rizal Avenue as a result of clearing operations, massed in front of the Manila City Hall yesterday to protest the alleged arrests and extortion activities of some Manila policemen, despite Mayor Alfredo Lim's campaign against rogue cops.

Lim had previously cleared the city's streets of vendors and promised to give them a portion of the sidewalks where they could ply their trade.

But Adel Caparino of the Alyansa ng Maralitang Manininda para sa Karapatan at Kabuhayan said the mayor had so far failed to provide them protection and a safe place to conduct their business.

"Some policemen either confiscate our wares, ask for protection money, or arrest us for obstruction although we were already driven away from our previous selling areas," she added. Caparino said they welcomed a proposal to organize the vendors so they would be given permits to sell, and at the same time, allow the city to earn from their dues.



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- Is there an everyday role model in your neighborhood?
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METROBRIEFS

Suspected bomber gives himself up

THE MAN suspected of planting two improvised explosives inside his mother's home in Malibay, Pasay City, gave himself up to Mayor Wenceslao Trinidad yesterday. Glenn Mercadijas was accompanied by his mother when he surrendered and insisted that he did not have anything to do with the explosives which were discovered last week. "I have not gone home for quite some time. I am only a house painter," Mercadijas said in Filipino. He added that he was giving himself up to clear his name. His mother, Gloria, also vouched for her son's innocence, saying she believed that he did not have anything to do with the bombs found in her apartment on Apelo Cruz St. in Barangay 162, Zone 18. On Friday, two mineral water bottles filled with pyrotechnic powder were recovered by police and defused. Police said the explosives may have been assembled earlier this year and were only discovered by the elder Mercadijas after one of the apartment's rooms was cleaned.

Julie M. Aurelio

Cat burglars trip alarm

THE MARIKINA City police chief yesterday urged banks and pawnshops to update their security and alarm systems to avoid false alarms. Supt. Sotero Ramos issued the advisory after a BPI Family Bank branch in Barangay Concepcion Uno sounded several times from midnight well into dawn. It later turned out to be a false alarm. Ramos said he would write a letter to the bank management to check their alarm system as it was not the first time that the incident happened. A report from the Agence France-Presse said that police entered the bank and saw a stray cat slip through the door and escape. They also saw another cat flee through a small hole in the ceiling.

Kristine L. Alave with AFP

Kalimasada Philippines marks 12th year

TETADA Kalimasada Philippines, the country chapter of the Indonesia-based Tetada Kalimasada International, is celebrating its 12th anniversary on Saturday, Sept. 1 at 7:30 a.m. in the North Greenhills Clubhouse in San Juan. TK Philippine founder and President Leo Villarosa announced that Grandmaster Eddy Surohadi and his spouse, International Master Dr. Ibu Ida Widyastuti of Surabaya, would be present. Kalimasada is an ancient Javanese martial art practiced among royalty. The choreographed movements which are called Jurus uses triangular diaphragmatic breathing and alpha concentration to strengthen the immune system and mobilize the inner energy cultivated for health maintenance and stress reduction. TK Philippines has five recognized centers in Quezon City, Manila, Subic, Cebu and Cagayan de Oro. For more details, please contact Evelyn at 721-2578, April at 0917-5212333 or Leo at 0917-5213456.

UP stude …

From page A21

that, they never heard from him again. No one was also able to contact him on his cellular phone.

Abdulwahid said she and the other officers were waiting for the university administration to issue a statement on the incident.

The INQUIRER called up the UP Police Force to get more information, but was told by a certain Corporal Kalibo that they were still looking into the incident.

According to him, they only received a phone call from the Veteran's Memorial Hospital which informed them that a student had died there after an incident on the UP Diliman campus near the Bahay ng Alumni.

The Quezon City Police District has launched a parallel investigation into the incident.

Sunnis cool to Iraq deal

BAGHDAD—SUNNI ARAB politicians refused to end their boycott of Iraq's Shiite-led government on Monday despite a broadbrush deal aimed at bridging the country's bitter sectarian divide.

The accord was cautiously welcomed by the United States, which faces demands to withdraw its troops and calls from lawmakers in Washington for Shiite Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki to resign.

Leaders of Iraq's rival Shiite, Sunni and Kurdish sects squeezed out the agreement after lengthy talks on Sunday, but leading Sunni Arab politicians said it failed to meet all their demands.

The leaders agreed to ease restrictions on former members of Saddam Hussein's Baath party taking up government jobs, to hold provincial elections—a key Washington demand—and to help security forces end the bloodshed, President Jalal Talabani's office said.

US President George W. Bush welcomed Sunday's deal but warned that much work remained.

In a hastily announced public statement in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Bush said the agreement showed that leaders in Baghdad understand that they need to pursue the "true and meaningful reconciliation" that has so far eluded them.

"While yesterday's agreement is an important step, I reminded them and they understand much more needs to be done. The Iraqi parliament will convene again in early September and it will need to act to codify this political progress," he said.

Maliki, a Shiite; Talabani, a Kurd; Sunni Vice President Tareq al-Hashemi; Shiite Vice President Adel Abdel Mahdi and Massud Barzani, president of the autonomous northern Kurdish region, made a rare television appearance after making Sunday's reconciliation pledge. *AFP*

Embattled Abe reshuffles Cabinet

TOKYO—JAPAN'S PRIME MINister Shinzo Abe shook up his cabinet in a sweeping reshuffle on Monday, tapping experienced hands to try to rescue a government beleaguered by scandals and a crushing election defeat.

The conservative premier brought in new ministers for defense, finance and foreign affairs and replaced his right-hand man, the chief cabinet secretary.

Abe, whose last cabinet was plagued by scandal, looked to veterans within the ruling party, notably influential former foreign minister Nobutaka Machimura who returns to his old job.

ABE AFP

Abe said the new cabinet will pay special attention to scandals over money as well as caring for provincial regions, which have failed to benefit significantly from an economic recovery and revolted in an election last month.

"We are resolved to do our utmost to show achievements so that politics and the administration will regain the lost trust of the public," Abe told a press conference after forming the new cabinet.

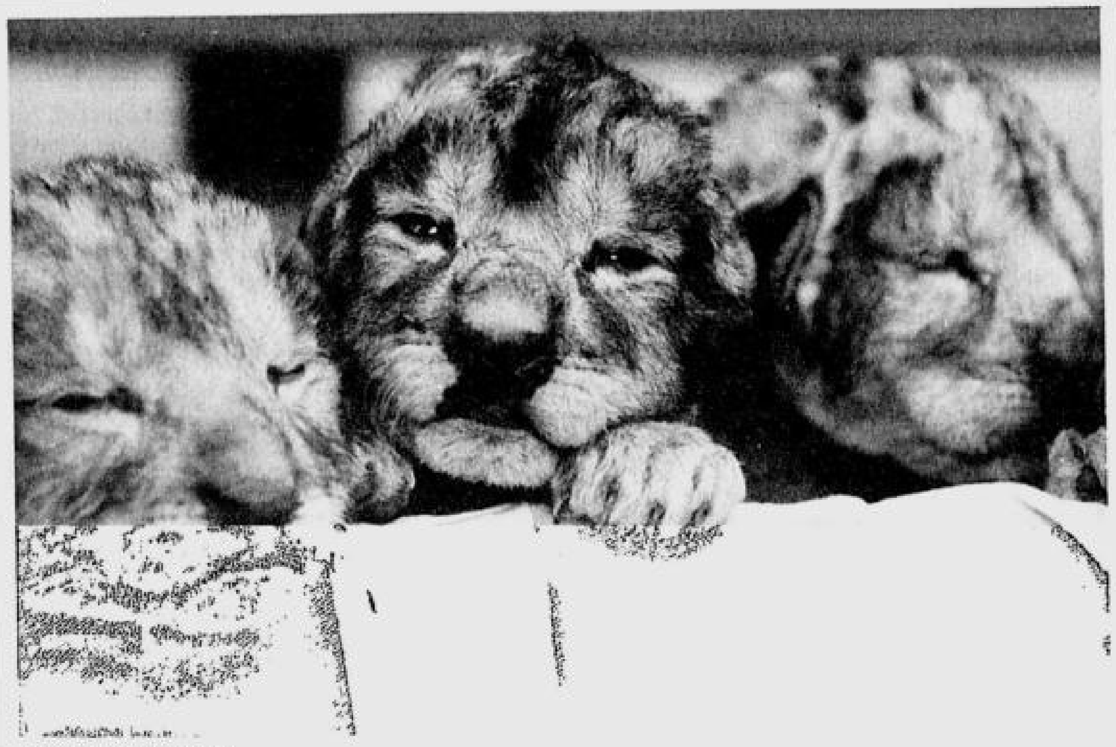
"We must continue reforms and keep up the ongoing economic growth. Unless there is growth, we wouldn't be able to share its fruits with local communities," he said.

Abe picked outgoing Foreign Minister Taro Aso as secretary general of the Liberal Democratic Party, its top job after the premier.

Aso is popular within the party, which is reeling after losing control last month of the upper house of parliament for the first time since the Liberal Democrats were founded in 1955.

Abe faces record low approval ratings and calls from backbenchers to stand down after the election defeat. But he has refused to quit, insisting voters supported his ideas and were upset by the scandals.

For foreign minister he brought back Machimura, who heads the most powerful faction in the ruling party—making him a crucial political asset. *AFP*


ENDANGERED
Newly born white lion cubs are displayed at Jordan Zoo near Amman on Aug. 27. REUTERS

China's online game overloads server

BEIJING—A CHINESE GOVernment-sponsored online game that allows players to battle corrupt officials and their bikini-clad mistresses has been overwhelmed by user demand, state media reported on Tuesday.

The Ningbo Haishu District Discipline Commission in Zhejiang province launched "Incorruptible Warrior" to show people how to fight corrupt officials, Xinhua News Agency said.

But demand for the game was too heavy.

"It has been closed so it could be updated as more and more users have registered, overloading the server," Xinhua quoted an unidentified commission official as saying.

Corruption remains widespread among high-level officials in China, despite public anger and repeated campaigns by the ruling Communist Party to uproot graft.

"The game requires players to learn government anticorruption measures and to kill corrupt officials while avoiding attacks by their henchmen and mistresses clad in bikinis," Xinhua said.

The game was released on July 25 and had reportedly attracted more than 10,000 players by Aug. 1. However, the game server could only accommodate 600 players at a time, according to head designer Hua Tong.

"The game is a new method of anticorruption education," Hua said. *AP*

Bacteria could point to life on Mars—study

LONDON—ANCIENT BACTERia are able to survive nearly half a million years in harsh, frozen conditions, researchers said on Monday in a study that adds to arguments that permafrost environments on Mars could harbor life.

The findings also represent the oldest independently authenticated DNA to date obtained from living cells and could offer clues to better understand ageing, said Eske Willerslev, a researcher at the University of Copenhagen who led the study.

"When it can live half a million years on Earth it makes it very promising it could survive on Mars for a very long time," Willerslev said. "Permafrost would be an excellent place to look for life on Mars."

The international team, which also included researchers from the United States, Canada, Russia and Sweden, tested the microbes living up to 10 meters deep in permafrost collected from Northern Canada, the Yukon, Siberia and Antarctica.

When a cell dies, its DNA fragments into pieces but the samples the researchers studied were all very long strands—evidence the cells were able to continuously repair genetic material and remain alive, said Willerslev, whose findings were published in the Proceedings of the Academy of Sciences.

"These cells are active cells repairing DNA to deal with continuous degradation of the genomes, which is the genetic material that is key to life," he said in a telephone interview.

"It is the same thing with humans." The scientists do not yet know the mechanism driving the continuous repair but Willerslev said the cells survived by eating nutrients like nitrogen and phosphate lodged in the permafrost.

This is interesting because the temperature on Mars is much colder with more stable temperatures, representing an even better environment to sustain this kind of life, he added.

While most scientists think our neighbor in the solar system is lifeless, the discovery of microbes on Earth that can exist in environments previously thought too hostile has fueled debate over extraterrestrial life.

Researchers had known these microbes could survive for a long time without food but until now there was little agreement on how long they could live, Willerslev said.

Knowing this, and eventually pinpointing the key to this longevity, may also help scientists better understand the ageing process, he added.

"It is interesting to see why some cells can survive for a very long time," he said. "That can be a key for understanding ageing." *Reuter*

Taliban to release hostages

GHAZNI, AFGHANISTAN—Taliban militants agreed on Tuesday to free 19 South Korean church volunteers held hostage for more than a month after Seoul agreed to end all missionary work and keep a promise to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan by the end of the year.

South Korean presidential spokesperson Cheon Ho-sun said from Seoul that the deal had been reached "on the condition that South Korea withdraws troops by the end of year and South Korea suspends missionary work in Afghanistan," he said.

Seoul has already said it planned to withdraw its troops by the end of the year. Some 200 South Korean soldiers have been deployed in Afghanistan for reconstruction efforts, not combat.

South Korean missionaries have been active in Afghanistan, but travel to the country independently. The government has insisted that the 19 kidnapped South Koreans were not missionaries, but were doing aid work.

There was no word on when the captives would be released.

The Taliban had also been demanding the release of militant prisoners in exchange for the captives' freedom. Afghan officials had ruled out any exchange, saying such a move will only encourage further kidnappings.

The Taliban kidnapped 23 South Koreans as they traveled by bus from Kabul to the former Taliban stronghold of Kandahar on July 19. In late July, the militants executed two male hostages. They released two women earlier this month as a goodwill gesture.

Tuesday's agreement came after face-to-face talks between both sides in the central town of Ghazni. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

33 Iraqi rebels killed

BAGHDAD—US and Iraqi troops killed 33 insurgents in an airborne assault and airstrikes north of Baghdad aimed at reopening a major irrigation canal that had been seized by gunmen, the US military said on Tuesday. "The pre-dawn assault, involving several hundred Iraqi and Coalition forces defeated numerous small-arms attacks throughout the day, resulting in a combined 13 insurgents killed," the US military said in a statement. "Attack helicopters and close air support ... killed 20 more," it said. Residents in Khalis, a religiously mixed town 80 kilometers north of Baghdad, told Reuters that insurgents had shoveled earth into the irrigation canal some days ago, cutting off water to farmland. ***Reuters***

Indon jetliner's black boxes found

JAKARTA—Salvage crews have recovered the flight data and cockpit voice recorders of an Indonesian jetliner that plunged into the sea on New Year's Day, killing all 102 people onboard, a senior government official said on Tuesday. "They have retrieved two black boxes," said Tatang Kurniadi, chair of the National Transportation Safety Commission, after a vessel operated by the US company Phoenix International scoured waters off Sulawesi island. "God willing, they are still readable." Family members of the victims are optimistic the boxes will "solve the mystery behind the accident," said Julince Tumurang, whose sister was on the Adam Air flight KI574. ***AP***

Britain won't pull out troops

LONDON—Prime Minister Gordon Brown rejected on Tuesday a call to pull British troops out of Iraq, insisting they still had an important job to do battling militias and providing security. In an open letter to an opposition party leader, he argued it was wrong to say the continued presence of British troops would achieve little, or to say that they were severely restricted in what they are able to do. "UK forces in Basra continue to have the capability to strike against the militias and provide overall security," he said in the letter to Menzies Campbell, leader of Britain's third party, the Liberal Democrats, which opposed the Iraq war. ***Reuters***

Burma protesters detained

YANGON—Dozens of pro-democracy supporters, including a top labor activist, were detained on Tuesday as they tried to launch a new protest in Yangon against a sharp rise in fuel prices, witnesses said. About 50 activists had gathered near a bus stop near the former campus of Yangon University on the north side of Burma's (Myanmar's) main city, but plainclothes police and pro-junta militia broke up the group after only 10 minutes, witnesses said. Among those arrested was Su Su Nway, a labor activist sent to prison in October 2005 for more than seven months after reporting cases of forced labor to the United Nations, witnesses said. Protesters chanted "Lower fuel prices, lower commodity prices!" as they walked along a main road. ***AFP***

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Another longtime aide to Bush resigns

GONZALES AP

WASHINGTON—US ATTORNEY GENERAL Alberto Gonzales announced his resignation on Monday after months of questions about his competence and accusations from Congress that he politicized the office to benefit President George W. Bush.

Bush, who doggedly supported Gonzales during repeated confrontations with the Democratic-controlled Congress, said Gonzales had endured "months of unfair treatment that has created a harmful distraction at the Justice Department."

"It's sad that we live in a time when a talented and honorable person like Alberto Gonzales is impeded from doing important work because his good name was dragged through the mud for political reasons," Bush said.

Both Republicans and Democrats in Congress had demanded the 52-year-old Gonzales' resignation over the sacking of federal prosecutors last year, which critics said were politically motivated. He faced a possible perjury investigation for testimony before Congress, where lawmakers complained that his leadership had rendered the Justice Department dysfunctional.

Gonzales also weathered criticism on several other fronts, including his support for Bush's domestic spying program and his 2002 legal opinion that parts of the Geneva Convention on the treatment of prisoners of war were "obsolete." He announced at the Justice Department that he will step down on Sept. 17.

The attorney general gave no reason for his sudden decision to leave, but wrote in his resignation letter to Bush: "This is the right time for my family and I to begin a new chapter in our lives."

The son of migrant workers who began working for Bush as a lawyer when the president was still the governor of Texas, Gonzales told reporters: "I have lived the American dream. Even my worst days as attorney general have been better than my father's best days." *Reuters*

7 charged with arson for raging fires in Greece

ATHENS—GREECE CHARGED SEVEN people with starting the raging forest fires that have claimed more than 60 lives, as firefighters backed by an international force battled the flames for a fifth day on Tuesday.

As darkness fell on Monday, flames lit up the night sky as they tore through bone-dry forests and bushes in the Peloponnese, the mountainous peninsula to the south of Athens.

Planes and helicopters made repeated swoops over the blazing trees to drop thousands of liters of water but winds gusting up to 70 kilometers per hour kept the flames alight.

Rescuers evacuated 27 villages in the Peloponnese as the fires threatened to engulf them, and parts of Evia island to the northeast of the capital were also ablaze.

At least 63 people have died, including 59 in the Peloponnese alone, although no new deaths were discovered on Monday.

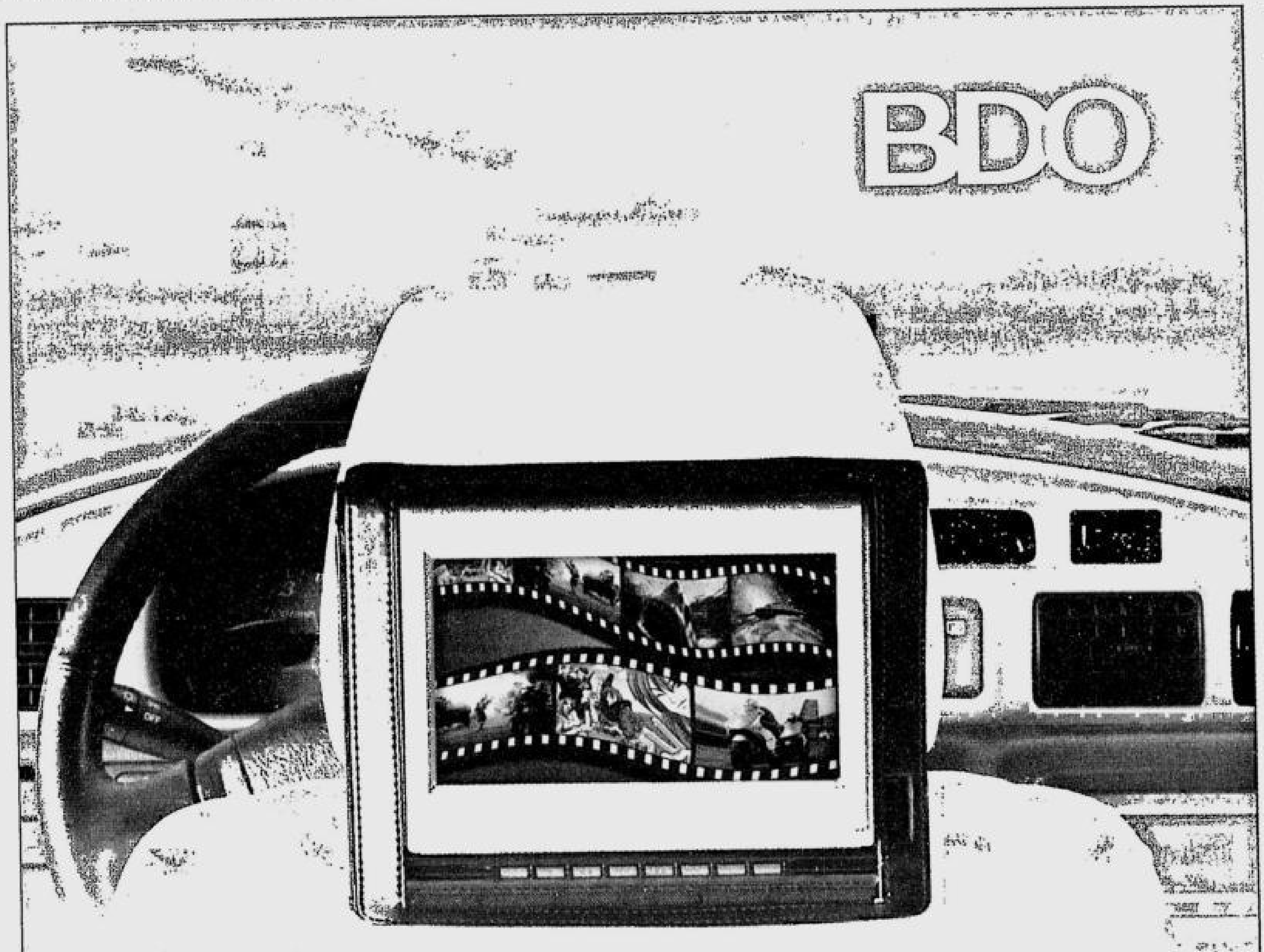
With new fires still breaking out, Greek authorities increasingly believed they were started deliberately.

Seven people were charged with arson and a further 26 people have been charged with lesser offenses linked to a series of fires that have blighted Greece since early July.

Antiterrorist authorities said they were joining the investigation.

A reward of up to 1 million euro ($1.36 million) has been offered for help in catching arsonists. *AFP*

FLAMES reach a church at Zoodoho Pigi outside of Andritsena village in Peloponnese peninsula on Monday Aug. 27. Several villages were evacuated as massive forest fires, fanned by strong winds, swept through swathes of southern Greece. AP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Russia arrests 10 in journalist's murder

MOSCOW—RUSSIA ON MONday announced 10 arrests in the killing of investigative reporter Anna Politkovskaya, blaming her murder and other high-profile crimes on a foreign-based campaign to destabilize President Vladimir Putin.

Prosecutor Gen. Yury Chaika told Putin in a televised meeting that police had made "serious progress." "To date we have arrested 10 people. In the very near future they will be charged with committing this serious crime," he said in the comments shown on NTV television.

He appeared to point the finger at exiled Putin critics, saying those behind the October 2006 killing—which highlighted dangers faced by journalists in Russia and badly embarrassed the Kremlin—were abroad.

"The individuals interested in eliminating Politkovskaya can only be ones living beyond Russia's borders," Chaika later told reporters.

"It's useful above all to people and structures that are aimed at destabilizing the country and undoing the constitutional order in Russia."

Chaika said the same group of killers may have been behind the 2004 murder of another journalist, US citizen Paul Klebnikov, and the murder in Moscow last year of the central bank's deputy chief.

"As our probe shows, the string of murders that took place were the same type of provocation," Chaika said. "It's not a first attempt. There is a list of previous murders that were similar provocations."

According to Chaika, the actual killers included serving and retired members of Russia's interior ministry and elite federal security service. They were led by someone from war-torn Chechnya, he said.

However, the motivation was "aimed at provoking external pressure on our country's leadership," Chaika asserted.

Chaika's comments appeared to refer especially to outspoken Kremlin critic and exiled businessman Boris Berezovsky, who has political asylum in Britain, and has repeatedly called for Putin to be forced from office.

An extradition request would be issued for the alleged mastermind "when we have fuller proof," Chaika said.

Berezovsky shot back, saying the Kremlin organized Politkovskaya's murder. "They are mad, they are seriously sick, they are really mad, Chaika, the Kremlin, the prosecutor's office," he told AFP in London. *AFP*

Iran protests against new Mohammed cartoon

STOCKHOLM—IRAN SUMmoned a Swedish diplomat to its foreign ministry on Monday to protest against a cartoon in a Swedish newspaper depicting the head of Prophet Mohammed on a dog's body, Sweden's foreign ministry said.

"Gunilla von Bahr, Sweden's *charge d'affaires*, was summoned to the Iranian foreign ministry today where she received a protest from the Iranian government," foreign ministry spokesperson Anna Bjoerkander told AFP.

The Iranian government told Von Bahr the cartoon was "offensive to Prophet Mohammed," Bjoerkander said, refusing to disclose any further details of the meeting.

The cartoon was drawn by Swedish artist Lars Vilks, whose series of drawings of the prophet as a dog have sparked a controversy in Sweden. Several art galleries refused to display the sketches amid fears of angry reactions from Muslims.

The Oerebro local newspaper Nerikes Allehanda published one of the drawings on Aug. 18 to illustrate an editorial on self-censorship and freedom of religion.

"The editorial was critical of the fact that so many had turned down Vilks's drawings for fear of the reactions they would provoke," Nerikes Allehanda's chief editor Ulf Johansson told AFP.

On Saturday, a week after the publication, a group of about 60 Muslims held a demonstration outside the newspaper's office to protest against the publication of the sketch.

The publication of 12 cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed in Denmark's biggest daily Jyllands-Posten in September 2005 led to violent demonstrations throughout the Muslim world in January and February 2006. *AFP*

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NCAA, San Beda reach compromise on Aljamal

Red Lions to freeze high-scoring skipper until Final Four

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE SAN BEDA RED LIONS and the NCAA put the promise in compromise.

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The controversy stemmed from Aljamal's decision to join the recent PBA Draft without league permission. Though NCAA players sought written consent from the league in the past two seasons, there are no provisions requiring consent in the league by-laws.

Just the same, the NCAA management committee recommended that Aljamal—picked 8th overall by Air 21 and then traded to Talk 'N Text—be suspended for the rest of the season.

The NCAA Policy Board was set to junk the recommendation in favor of a more lenient three-game penalty but San Beda obtained a 72-day TRO last Wednesday.

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Gerald B. Mungcal
Royal University
Chasse Arteskwela Tarlac
55.88 x 74.93 cm

Emerson F. Gulam
Alaala
Tarlac State University
91.44 x 91.44 cm

Julmard D. Vicente
Rangtay
University of the East Caloocan
74.93 x 101.6 cm

Photography Category

James Brian K. Ona
Tulay ng Kalakalan at Hanapbuhay – Quiapo Bridge
Polytechnic University of the Philippines Sta. Mesa

Jemerson M. Magay
Brave
Asia Pacific College

Dave J. Buenconsejo
The Lighthouse of Liloan After a Rain
University of San Carlos

Dave Arjay A. Tan
Nahawing Ulap sa Hangin ni Bonifacio
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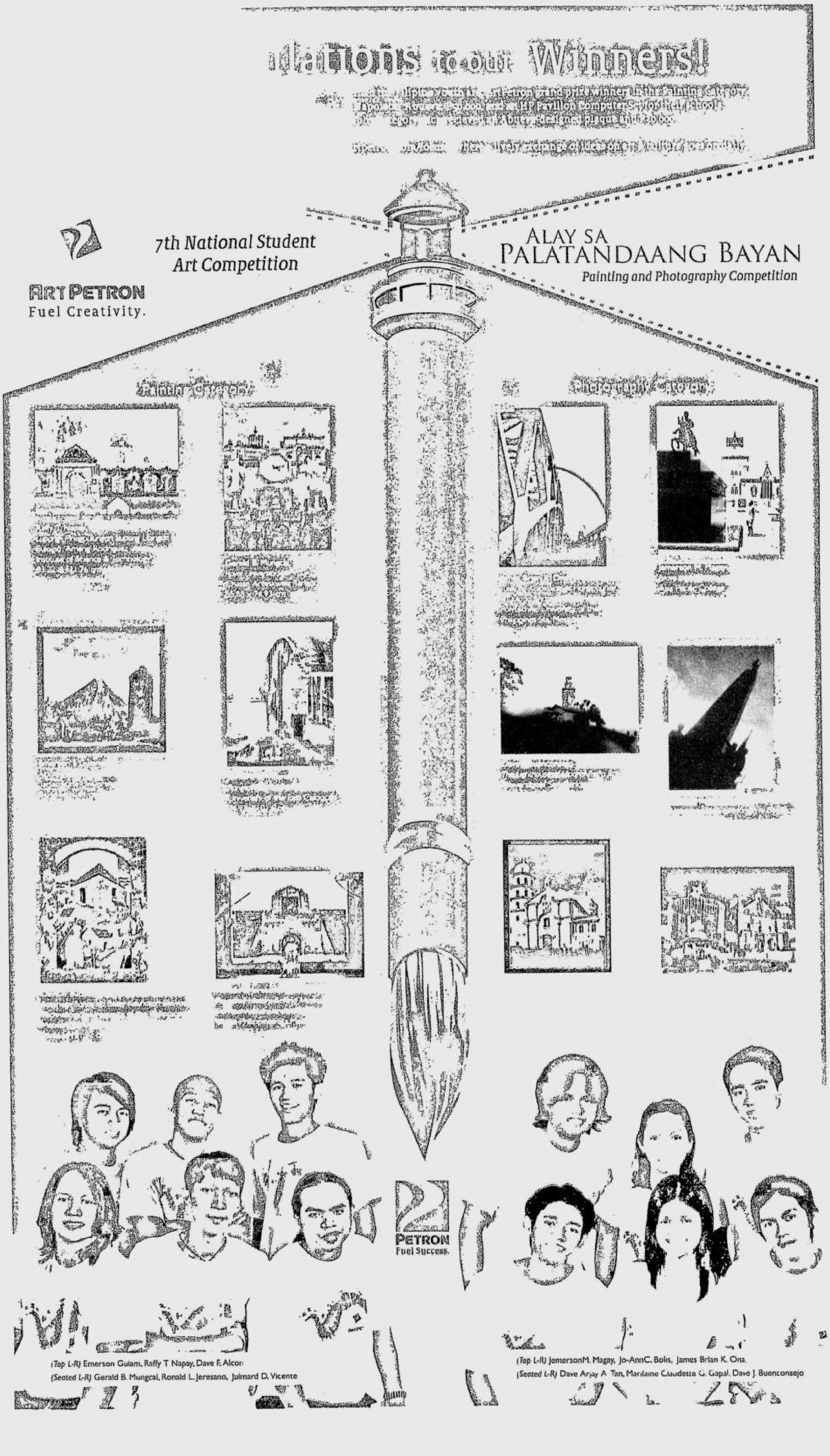

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Fernandos show way in qualifier

By Musong R. Castillo

SILANG, CAVITE—COUSINS BELONGING TO different stables set the pace after 18 holes of the marathon NGAP National Team qualifier at the Couples layout of The Riviera here yesterday.

Anthony Fernando stumbled with a double bogey on No. 18 and settled for a three-under-par 69, leaving him just a stroke ahead of Mark Fernando, whose brilliant conquest of the tough finishing hole completed his rally for a 70.

The 24-year-old Anthony had a five-under card going before spraying his drive way right into a hazard. After taking a drop, he didn't have a clear shot at the green, which he reached in four to throw away what had been a great round.

"I hit my drives straight all day until that one," Fernando, a mainstay of the ICTSI-backed program under Bong Lopez, said in Filipino.

While Anthony had his troubles just when a heavy downpour came, Mark played the 18th perfectly, hammering a long drive to the center of the fairway. He landed his second shot six feet from the pin tucked in the right portion of the wide green and made birdie.

That capped a blistering fightback from two over after 11 holes and it put Calatagan's foremost ward in position for a first-ever chance to represent the Philippines internationally.

The 144-hole tryouts are being held to determine the six members of the RP squad that will play in the Nomura and Putra Cups and the Southeast Asian Games later in the year.

And the sidelight—the duel between Ictsi vs. Calatagan—could be most interesting.

"There were some jitters on my part, probably because of over-eagerness," Mark, also 24 who trains in Calatagan under the National Caddies Open program, said in Filipino. "I hope to be steadier in the next days."

First Caddies Open champion Jonnel Ababa bounced back from a front-nine 37 to match par 72 for solo third, two strokes ahead of tournament favorite Jay Bayron, who shot a 74.

Gene Bondoc and Miko Alejandro, two others in the Ictsi pool, matched Bayron's total, while the long-hitting Erwin Vinluan, a former RP team member, a scrambled for a 75 like struggling Asian Games bronze medal winner Michael Bibat.

Eric Gozo and Ictsi's Jong Laput and Ferdie Aunzo were another stroke adrift at 76.

Rufino Bayron, Jay's younger brother who won the first two legs of the Pilipinas Amateur Tour, limped home with a 79 and would need a lot of catching up to do in the final three rounds of the first phase.

LATE-HOLE COLLAPSE: Anthony Fernando (left).

Imports power Koreans past Harbour-RP 5

BRUNEI—JASON CASTRO BOUNCED BACK from a lackluster game but his impressive form went for naught as the import-powered LG Sakers of Korea buried the Harbour-Philippine training team, 102-87, Monday in the Brunei Cup at the National Indoor Stadium here.

Castro, a back-to-back Philippine Basketball League most valuable player, led the team with 19 points on 7-of-13 shooting.

But Castro's effort went for naught as Odartey Blackson and Calvin Warner imposed their will inside the paint from the second quarter to take the fight out of the RP squad.

After scoring only six points in their 89-79 win over Jordan All-Stars last Sunday, Castro made his presence felt, completing a big three-point play to push the RP dribblers ahead, 40-37. That gutsy drive off Warner gave the Filipinos their last taste of the lead.

That was the Filipinos' last taste of the lead, though, as LG Sakers produced an avalanche of baskets.

The two imports combined for 53 points with Warner topscoring with 32 markers.

The win was the second straight for LG Sakers while the Harbour Centre-backed RP training team fell to 1-1, the same record of PBA ballclub Sta. Lucia, which absorbed a 67-82 loss to Darwin All-Stars last Sunday.

Pacquiao and Roach have a problem

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

LOS ANGELES—THE PROBLEM WITH Manny Pacquiao, as trainer Freddie Roach has reluctantly admitted, is that he tends to be too cute.

"Manny loves to play to the crowd," Roach told media men after he finally cracked the whip and threatened to bolt Pacquiao's Cebu training camp.

The problem with Freddie Roach, as Manny Pacquiao has refused to notice, is that he tends to be soft and sweet.

Roach has again realized they were repeating an old mistake—working in an unsecured gym. Just the same, he has offered to take another risk.

* * *

It's like this. Roach leaned back and danced with Pacquiao by saying the Pacman's unscheduled desertation of the Wild Card gym, three days after he checked in for training here on Aug. 7, was all part of an original plan.

Roach, who had to cool his heels at Wild Card upon hearing Pacquiao might leave Manila and return here, played it dumb for the sake of his prized warrior. He agreed to try their luck and train in untested terrain.

* * *

But, as Roach would admit, the problem was not the howling hordes alone.

It was Manny himself!

"He's not focusing on the fight, he's focusing on the fans," Roach complained to reporters the other day.

Of course, Roach did not verbalize his sentiments to Pacquiao.

He telegraphed his punches.

Maybe he did not like to hurt Pacquiao, who has lately been accused of having grown onion-skinned following his mean stand against certain media men.

* * *

The bigger problem here is that both Pacquiao and Roach are caught in a trap. They are in great danger of committing the same fatal mistake.

"The last time we did it and allowed the crowds in, we lost focus and lost to Erik Morales," Roach said in dismay.

At least, Roach is honestly trying to put the house in order, so to say. At least, he has realized what he had told this reporter earlier that: "Nothing is normal when it comes to Manny."

* * *

Sorry, but this has to be told.

The celebrated boxing professor has overlooked one glaring error.

Before Wild Card, there was another place where he fumbled in training; although Pacquiao was lucky to have a patsy for his immediate opponent.

This was in the "Yanig sa Taguig" staged at The Fort on Dec. 11, 2004.

For this fight, Roach agreed to prepare Pacquiao at the Almendras Gym in Davao.

They were short on days but, as the bout against Thai Fahsan 3-K Battery neared, Roach told this reporter, "Manny is already a hundred percent."

* * *

No, Roach was not lying.

Maybe he was honestly convinced Pacquiao, despite the fact that they had to cram and cut corners, was perfectly ready for a 12-round encounter.

But Pacquiao, in that bout, faded rapidly and was already gasping for air at the end of the third round.

He made the sign of the cross. Pacquiao was glaring silly, maybe wondering what happened to his gas tank, and clapped his gloves at the start of the fourth round.

As fate would have it, Pacquiao predictably nailed the dumb foe in the fifth, sending the Thai a few inches off the floor with a mighty left hook.

The Thai, senseless, had to be taken out on a stretcher.

* * *

To make the long story short, the faults and errors in that fight have all been swept under the rug.

There has been no mention whatsoever of what went wrong.

But cutman Leny de Jesus, a Puerto Rican who flew in all the way from New York, was direct to the point.

"This is good for boxing, but definitely very bad for Manny," he warned.

How true. But why has Roach allowed Pacquiao to again train in a carnival?

If Roach and Pacquiao have not yet packed their bags for a trip back to Wild Card, it's imperative that the President of the Philippines, Gloria Arroyo, step in.

She should send in her security people, in full force, to prevent Pacquiao and Roach from assassinating themselves.

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Pacquiao taking a risk, say Wild Card people

By Recah Trinidad

PACQUIAO

LOS ANGELES—THE theater-like set-up at the Cebu training site is perfect for Manny Pacquiao, who loves to play to the crowd, but a top deputy to trainer Freddie Roach says his boss did right in threatening to bolt and come home over a question of crowd control.

Roach on Sunday gave managers at the RWS Gym one last chance to hold back boxing fanatics that have tended to wreck Pacquiao's regimen.

"Freddie did right, he knows what he's doing," boxing teacher Eric Brown told the INQUIRER yesterday at Wild Card upon learning of Roach's displeasure.

Brown said he found it ridiculous that Pacquiao took the risk (to train in the Philippines) when it has been proven time and again Wild Card was perfect for him."

Pacquiao fights Marco Antonio Barrera, whom he stopped in their first meeting in Texas in 2003, on Oct. 6 at the Mandalay Bay Resort in Las Vegas.

The mainer of the "Will to Win" card is being drumbeated as the final ring appearance of Barrera, a Mexican boxing icon who has been tipped to come in at his best.

"I'll slap anybody who says it will be an easy fight for Manny," Roach told a boxing website last week.

There will always be distractions wherever Pacquiao trains, but another trainer at Wild Card, Tommy Barett, said they could always close the gym door.

He added there will always be the tall, imposing Rob Peterson, a stern security officer, who has always kept Pacquiao fans in their proper place inside Roach's famous gym here.

Ola Afolabi, who moved out from London to work with Roach here, agreed that Pacquiao could not afford to take it easy.

He was wondering why the Pacman suddenly left after having checked in for training at Wild Card last Aug. 7. He also frowned on Pacquiao playing basketball when the big fight is just around the corner.

"Maybe Manny wanted to take it easy out there," he said.

Mundo stuns Paragua, shares first in US tilt

FILIPINO FIDE MASTER-CANdidate Anton Paolo Del Mundo bested countryman Grandmaster Mark Paragua in the fifth and final round to finish tied for first with three others in the Atlantic Open in Washington DC recently.

The United States-based Del Mundo, a software engineer, wound up with four points, the same total posted by International Masters Benjamin Finegold and Mikhail Zlotnikov and US Master Chris J. Mabe. Each of them received $1,200.

Paragua, the country's No. 3 player, got stuck at 3.5 points. He won his first three games, but settled for a draw with Finegold in the fourth round. ***Marlon Bernardino, Contributor***

SPORTSWATCH

100 fights up in Makati's Bates derby

SOME OF THE COUNTRY'S FINEST COCKERS AND BREEDERS clash starting at 12 noon today in the final round of the Richard L. Bates 7-Stag Derby at the Makati Coliseum.

Less than half of the field of 102 participants in Monday's opening round advanced to the 100-plus-match championship battles.

Unbeaten after three fights are Spartan's Masbate of Rey Briones and Bubot Booc, Malolos of Oca Domingo, JCAP 80 of John Capinpin and Madlambayan brothers, Swings of Tony Tan, San Francisco JCAP of Feliciano Brothers and Chick Babes I and II.

Cainta 'Stagwars' resumes today

EXPLOSIVE MATCHES ARE ON TAP STARTING AT 5 P.M. TODAY at the Cainta Fair Center Coliseum as the third round of eliminations of the 300-entry "Stagwars" 5-stag derby gets going with 65 fights.

After the first two rounds on Aug. 24 and 27, only five participants advanced to the finals slated Sept. 7 with three wins each—Nick Gani (Nick and Neil), E. Moralita (IBM Farms), Berong Omeng (Kaymito), Ronnie Ong and Gen Zubia of Tanay (Pink Panther) and the Toolhead entry from Taytay.

Ronnie Lacsina, one of the derby hosts, said two more elimination rounds will be held on Aug. 31 and Sept. 3.

Salvador gets back form, rules NGAT Cebu stage

FORMER NATIONAL CHAMPION NOEL Salvador flashed his old form as he ruled the 30-34 years old category of the Speedo National age-group triathlon series third leg held recently at the Alegre Beach Resort in Sogod, Cebu.

Salvador clocked 1 hour, 20 minutes and 37 seconds to beat former National team member and local bet Alberto Biagan who checked in 14 minutes and 54 seconds later.

Also winning in the 1-km swim, 30-km bike and 7.5-km run grind were Biagan's provincemates Gerry Calinawan, also a former RP team member, (20-24), Dax Sarabosing (25-29), Ronaldo Biagan (35-39), Oliver Oliverio (45-49) and Jose Ricardo Dizon (50-54).

Bacolod City also produced winners in Jason Makelan (19-and-under) and Dr. Richie Yusay (40-44).

Veteran Hong Kong triathlete Ian Dacre topped the 55-and-over category in 2:29:11.

In the distaff side, Lorrie Echavez bagged the gold medal in the 20-24 category.

The NAGT series next stops in Cagayan de Oro City on Sept. 16. For details, log on to www.triathlon.org.ph.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—White Diamond (5), Bodman's Bounty (8), Hudson Hawk (4), Latin Cat/Skip The Stag (2)

Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Alam Mo Na Yan (2), Princess Sophia (4), Hurry Princess (6), Medal's Time (1)

Race 3—(Penta/Qrt/Tri—Sexy Eyes/Eye Candy (6), Henry D' Eight (9), EJ Forever (5), Passing Through (7), Ilocos Pride (8)

Race 4—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Firehouse/Cash MC Call (3), Nico's Incharge (1), Gentleman's Lady (7), Vinfa's Pride (4), Noble Principality (5)

Race 5—(Qrt/Tri)—Western Dancer (1), Rock Attack Attack (7), Yankee Clipper (8), She Boom (4)

Race 6—(Qrt/Tri)—Winner-Take-All (3), Kimagure/Prospector's Cat (2), Long Hitter (1), Dona Marucha (6)

Race 7—(Qrt/Tri)—Real Spicy (1), Joletsky (2), Marque (6), Princess of Aachen (3)

Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Dixie Dash (5), Mes Monique (11), La Perouse (10), Sweet Talk (9), Jigsaw Star (2), Bundok Peninsula (8)

Japan swimfest: Molina sinks 2 RP marks

By June Navarro

MOLINA

MIGUEL MOLINA, THE COUNTRY'S MOST bemedalled athlete in the 2005 Southeast Asian Games, smashed two Philippine records at the Japan International Swimming Championships held in Tokyo last week.

The Athens Olympian clocked 51.11 seconds in the 100-meter freestyle, eclipsing his RP record of 51.66 set in last year's Doha Asian Games, in the competitions held Aug. 21 to 24, according to national swim chief Mark Joseph.

Molina, who trains under United States Olympic coach Dave Salo at the University of Southern California, timed 2:03.46 in the 200m individual medley, surpassing his old national mark of 2:03.73.

He became the first of three Filipino swimmers to qualify for the Beijing Olympics next year. Ryan Arabejo and JB Walsh also later made it to the RP squad.

Salo agreed to train the SEAG triple gold medalist for the Olympics after Molina showed impressive form at the world championships last June in Australia, according to Joseph.

Molina was mentored by former RP coach Ryuzo Ishikawa during the Tokyo meet.

Ishikawa predicted that Molina would be a force to reckon with at this year's SEAG in Thailand.

Phone Pals keeping solid roster intact

Aljamal may be TNT's only key addition

By Musong R. Castillo

ALJAMAL: Frankie Lim says TNT will sign him.

AFTER KEEPING QUIET FOR MOST OF THE OFFSEASON, TALK 'N TEXT hopes to make a lot of noise when it matters.

And the Phone Pals will hope to do it by bringing back the core of last season's roster.

The Phone Pals will welcome back Asi Taulava, Jimmy Alapag and Renren Ritualo and hope that nothing stands in the way of a renewal of Don Allado's contract in time for the start of the 33rd Philippine Basketball Association season on Oct. 14.

The Phone Pals didn't have a chance to take a direct part in the recent PBA draft, dealing away their selection rights last season, but managed to pick up No. 8 pick Yousif Aljamal via a trade with Air21.

"We are just looking to complete our roster by adding a No. 3 and a No. 4 (shooting guard and shooting forward)," team manager Frankie Lim told the INQUIRER. "The team is still in the United States and we will finalize the lineup when they return."

The Phone Pals are hoping that Aljamal will fill in the No. 3 spot.

Lim said they will definitely sign the 6-foot-4 multitasker from Pampanga, who has been the center of a row between the NCAA and San Beda.

The Phone Pals finished second to Alaska in the Fiesta Cup even with the absence of Alapag, Ritualo and Taulava, and their return has dissuaded the team from tinkering with its roster.

"We will not touch the nucleus of the team," he said. "We just need to sign a couple of role players."

Allado and the TNT management will sit down for a new pact when the team planes back home, though Lim said that he does not have an inkling on what the 6-foot-5 center wants and what management is willing to give.

Allado's old pact, which paid him the maximum P350,000 a month, expired at the end of last month.

Expats notch point for RP badminton in US

CHINESE EXPATRIATE LILI WANG beat two Americans in the women's singles qualifying round late Monday to boost the Philippine campaign in the US Orange Country Badminton Open.

Wang, who works as trainer in an exclusive club in Pasig, routed Chinese Wu Qiuming, 21-5, 21-5, in the second round before trouncing Rena Wang, 21-8, 21-8, to enter the main draw.

The tandem of Indonesian nationals Kwee Tiek and Rudy Wijaya also provided spark for the Manila team, besting the duo of Asam Scholl and Ryan Miglinusa of the United States, 21-18, 21-19, and Sameera and Gunatileka, 21-19, 21-18, in the men's doubles.

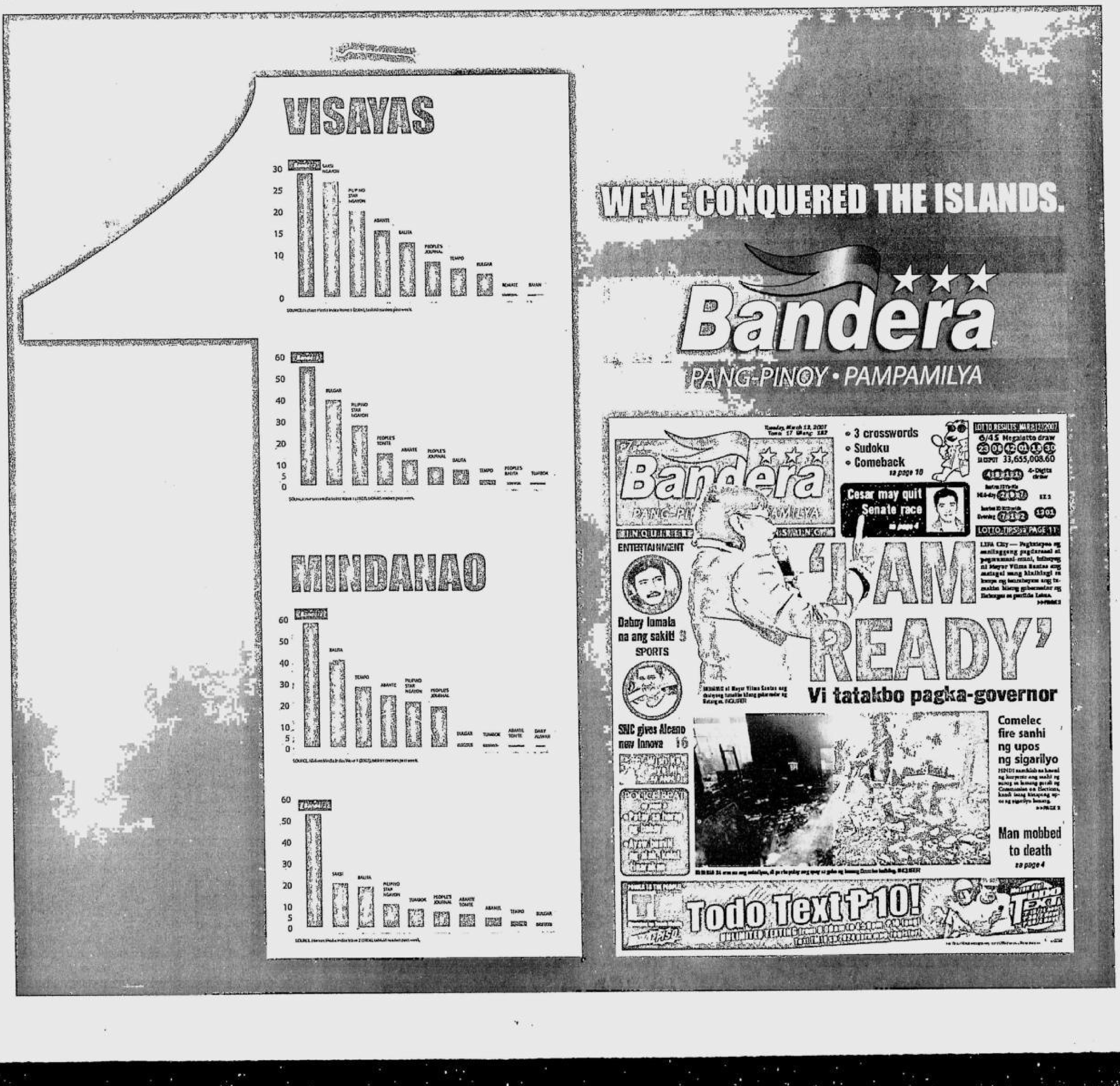
Despite the victories won in RP's behalf, the foreign shuttlers' stint threatened to stir a dispute on the local front.

Wang and the Indonesians reportedly secured sanction from the Philippine Badminton Association, although national head coach Errol Chan said he didn't know anything about the issue.

"These foreigners are not eligible to play for the Philippines without the sanction of the PBA," Chan said. "I don't know who gave them permission, maybe somebody from the high up."

PBA president and former First Lady Ming Ramos could not be reached for comment.

Chan has always been vocal against fielding an RP team that includes foreigners in international campaigns although Badminton World Federation allows it for as long as the particular player has a two-year residency with the country he or she represents.



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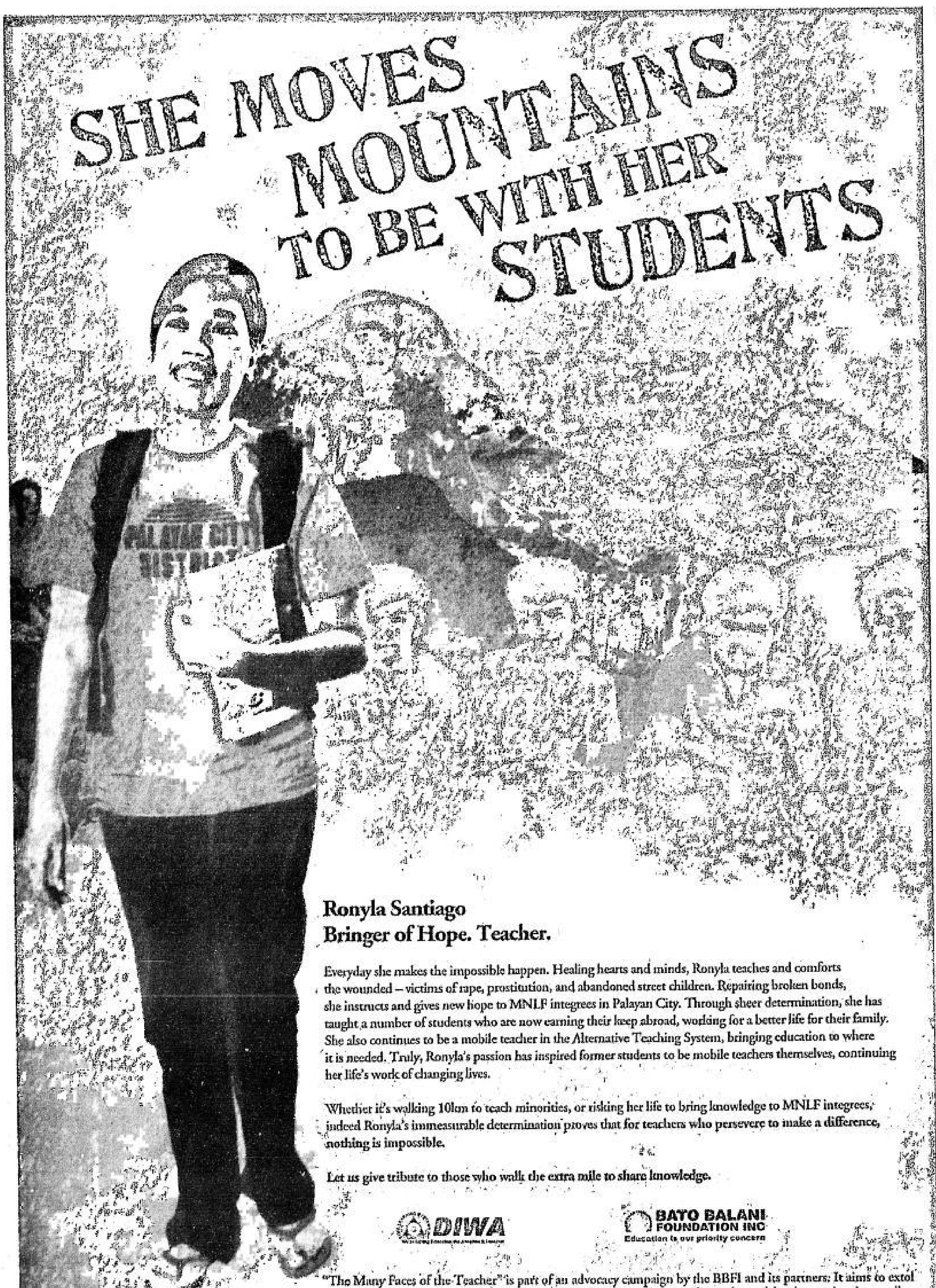
SHE MOVES MOUNTAINS TO BE WITH HER STUDENTS

Ronyla Santiago
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Everyday she makes the impossible happen. Healing hearts and minds, Ronyla teaches and comforts the wounded – victims of rape, prostitution, and abandoned street children. Repairing broken bonds, she instructs and gives new hope to MNLF integrees in Palayan City. Through sheer determination, she has taught a number of students who are now earning their keep abroad, working for a better life for their family. She also continues to be a mobile teacher in the Alternative Teaching System, bringing education to where it is needed. Truly, Ronyla's passion has inspired former students to be mobile teachers themselves, continuing her life's work of changing lives.

Whether it's walking 10km to teach minorities, or risking her life to bring knowledge to MNLF integrees, indeed Ronyla's immeasurable determination proves that for teachers who persevere to make a difference, nothing is impossible.

Let us give tribute to those who walk the extra mile to share knowledge.

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THE MANY FACES OF THE TEACHER

ROGER Federer breezes through the next round after a straight sets triumph over Scoville Jenkins. AP

Federer, Henin whip Open foes

NEW YORK—TOP SEEDS ROGER FEDERer and Justine Henin quickly won their first matches at the US Open on Monday, posting straight-set victories to advance to second round of the final Grand Slam event of the season.

Federer, seeking to become the first man in the Open era to win four straight titles in the US championship and first since Bill Tilden in 1923, faced only two break points in beating American Scoville Jenkins, 6-3, 6-2, 6-4.

"I thought it was a good match, you know, tough match. Didn't allow my opponent many chances on my serve," Federer said.

"Maybe other guys like five-setters in the first round. I like straight sets more. Some reason, I don't know why," he added smiling.

Henin, who was only 44 percent on her first serves, still moved past Germany's Julia Goerges, 6-0, 6-3, in one hour, two minutes.

"It's not my favorite Grand Slam," Henin said. "You need to get used to it. There are places where you feel a little bit better."

Fourth-seeded Nikolay Davydenko also won his first match easily while Jelena Jankovic struggled through some second-set trouble before prevailing.

Davydenko, a semifinalist last year, eliminated American teenager Jesse Levine, 6-4, 6-0, 6-1, beating one of 10 men making their first appearance in the US Open on Monday.

Jankovic began the day on the main Arthur Ashe Stadium show court and, after taking a 6-2, 5-1 lead, lost four straight before finally subduing Jarmila Gajdosova of Slovakia, 6-2, 7-6 (2).

Gajdosova survived double-match point at 5-4 to break Jankovic for a second time. She held and forced the tiebreaker, but the Serbian closed out the victory in 1:20.

Jankovic, who reached the semifinals at last year's US Open, admitted losing concentration midway through the match when her shoe "broke somehow." *AP*

Williamses honor Gibson with wins

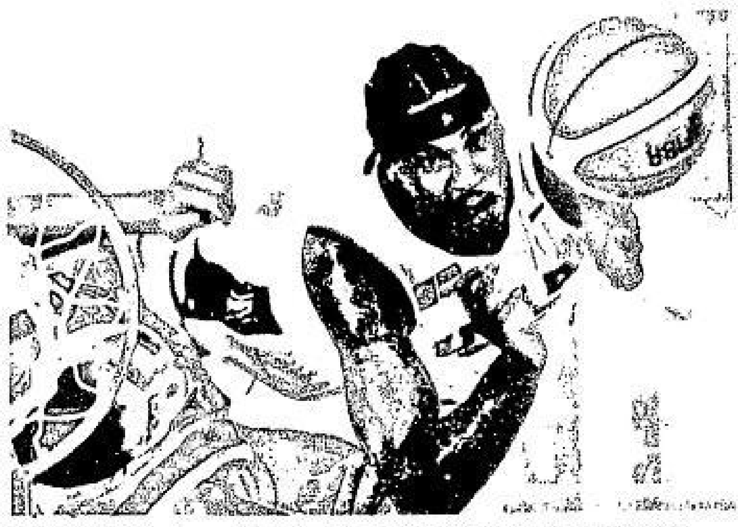
NEW YORK—SERENA WILLIAMS kept picking at that pesky pink bow, then pulled it completely off the front of her black dress.

On a night when so much had gone right, she wasn't about to let any wardrobe malfunction stop her Monday at the US Open.

With Janet Jackson in the stands for a tribute to Althea Gibson, the Williams sisters honored the trailblazer in their own way—with wins.

Aretha Franklin got the evening off to a rollicking start, belting out "Respect." Then Venus Williams beat Kira Nagy of Hungary 6-2, 6-1—highlighted by a Grand Slam-record 129 mph (203 kph) serve—and Serena finished off a full opening day with a forehand smash to down German teenager Angelique Kerber 6-3, 7-5.

"I know every time I step out on the court I play for me and I play for all the other African-American kids out there who have a dream and might not have the means," Serena said. *AP*



CARMELO Anthony (right) of the US fights for a rebound with Mexico's Gustavo Ayon. REUTERS

US shakes off scrappy Mexico, stays unbeaten

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA—THE United States got its biggest challenge at the 2007 FIBA Americas Championship, but it didn't prevent another lopsided victory.

Carmelo Anthony continued to dominate this Olympic Games qualifying event, scoring 28 points as the United States pulled away for a 127-100 victory over Mexico in the opening game of the second round for both clubs at the Thomas and Mack Center.

LeBron James and Dwight Howard scored 19 points apiece for the Americans (4-0), who will face Puerto Rico on Tuesday.

The Puerto Ricans stunned the Americans at the 2004 Olympics in Athens, Greece.

Puerto Rico (1-3) surprised Brazil, 97-75, on Monday.

In other second round matches Monday, Canada rolled over Uruguay, 95-88, and Argentina hammered Venezuela, 98-63.

Battling through a poor shooting night, Kobe Bryant again dug in defensively to set the tone for the United States. Bryant, who is a two-time scoring champion in the NBA, scored 21 points on just five-of-13 shooting.

Team USA plowed through the preliminary round, winning its first four contests by at least 37 points—including a 113-76 victory over previously undefeated Brazil on Sunday.

Guided by former US college coach Nolan Richardson, the Mexicans do not have the firepower of the Brazilians, who boast three NBA players. But Mexico played hard nonetheless, trailing by just 14 points at halftime.

The United States, which allowed its most points so far this tournament, outscored Mexico, 62-49, in the second half to secure the victory. *AFP*

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Gov't rejects all bids for 1-yr T-bills

DOF says banks want 'absurdly high' rates

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT REJECTED ALL BIDS FOR THE one-year treasury bills, saying the yields sought by banks were absurdly high given the much lower rate recorded in the previous auction.

Had the Bureau of the Treasury's auction committee accepted bids for the 364-day bills, the rate could have settled at 5.988 percent, an increase of 38.1 basis points from the 5.607 percent registered in the Aug. 13 auction.

"This is not the true price levels for this maturity under current situation. The bids were not reasonable and some were even 50 basis points higher than the previous," Finance Undersecretary Roberto Tan said in a briefing after yesterday's auction.

Tenders for the one-year bills amounted to only P3.23 billion, lower than the government's debt offering of P3.5 billion.

"Investors want better returns so they are testing the Treasury whether these rates can be accepted," Tan said.

The bellwether 91-day treasury bills fetched 3.731 percent, up 2 basis points from 3.711 percent two

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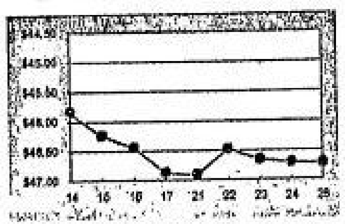

AUGUST

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 46.71 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Aug. 28, 2007

IN THIS ISSUE

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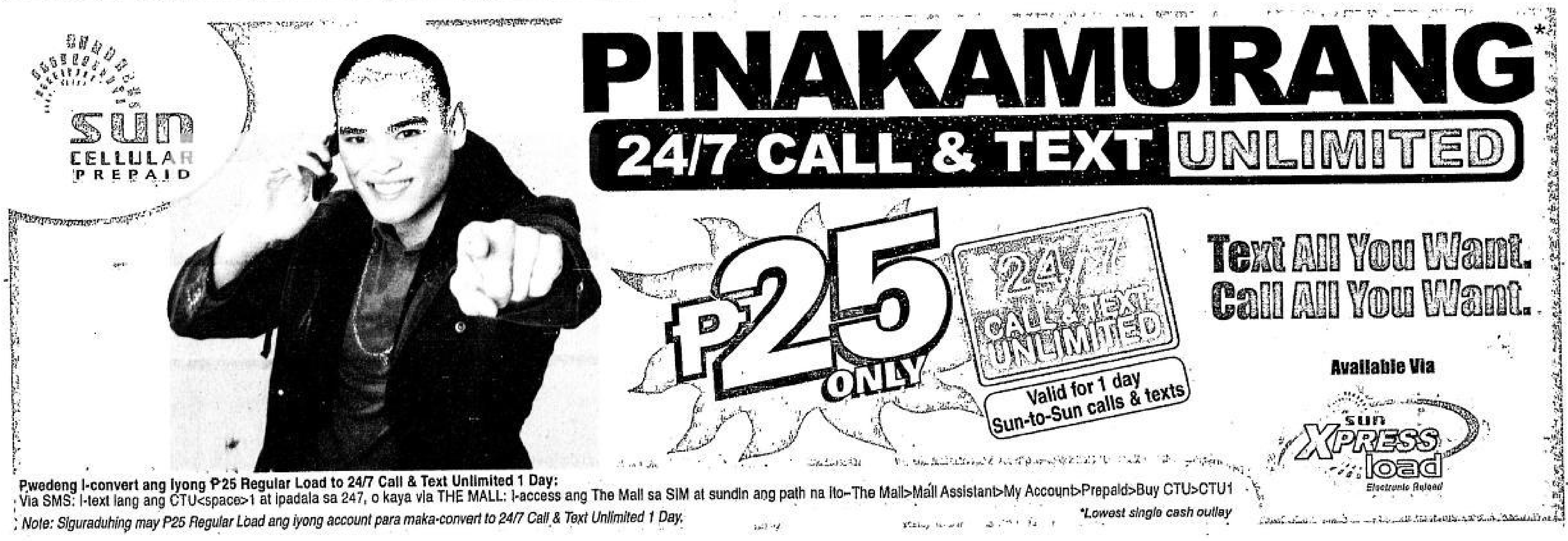
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Fil-Estate, Megaworld form joint venture

Taal Ridge, Iloilo projects

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

PUBLICLY LISTED Fil-Estate Land Inc. has teamed up with property giant Megaworld Corp. to undertake two major projects in Batangas and Iloilo.

Fil-Estate Land chair Robert John Sobrepeña said the first joint venture involved the development of a residential resort community dubbed Twin Lakes at Taal Ridge in Laurel, Batangas.

The 731-hectare project is expected to rake in roughly P40 billion in revenues over a development period of eight to 10 years. The first phase, which will consist of a golf course, land development and basic utilities, is estimated to cost at least P1 billion.

Sobrepeña said the due-diligence audit on the property owned by Fil-Estate in Taal Ridge has been completed and both parties were in the process of transferring assets to a joint-venture corporation—Twin Lakes Taal Ridge Corp.

Both Megaworld and Fil-Estate have put in P2 billion in assets—P1 billion worth of land (from Fil-Estate) and P1 billion in cash (from Megaworld)—in Taal Ridge Corp. The joint-venture company may also issue P3 billion worth of preferred shares in the future to raise the same amount of funds to spend for the development of the project.

Megaworld and Fil-Estate have also agreed to team up in the 150-hectare, mixed-used development called Sta. Barbara in Iloilo, near the newly opened airport. The first phase of the project, which will consist of a golf course and subdivision, will cost roughly P150 million to develop. Other phases of the project will include condominium-hotels, a cyberpark and other high-rise developments.

Aside from Megaworld, Fil-Estate Land—through its unit Fil-Estate Properties—has also signed an agreement with Woolim Construction Co. Ltd., a top developer and construction firm in Korea, to jointly develop the Renaissance 5000 tower at the Fil-Estate headquarters at the Renaissance Center in Pasig City.

The Renaissance 5000, estimated to cost P1.4 billion, is a 24-story condominium, the fourth to be built at the Renaissance Center.

Waterfront OKs capital hike to ₱10B

HOTEL OPERATOR Waterfront Philippines Inc. of plastics king William Gatchalian has gained shareholder approval to increase its authorized capital stock to P10 billion from P5 billion to allow the company to raise new funds from possible share offers.

In a disclosure, Waterfront said stockholders confirmed the authority of the company's board of directors to issue and dispose through a possible rights offer or other means the new shares out of the increase in capital stock.

Sources said the mode of issuance has yet to be firmed up. Proceeds from a possible stock rights offer may refinance debt and fund new projects and existing hotel improvements.

No other details were disclosed. *Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of August 28, 2007)

52-WKS HIGH	52-WKS LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.4	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	9.6	9.7	9.5	9.5	84,000
73	34.5	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	58.5	58.5	57.5	57.5	1,088,500
73.5	51.5	Bank of the Philippine Islands	58.5	60.5	58.5	59	1,509,300
935	630	China Banking Corp.	825	825	820	820	5,130
23.5	18.5	Citystate Savings Bank	23	23	23	23	400
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank, Inc	0.39	0.4	0.39	0.4	960,000
75.5	37	Metropolitan Bank & Trust Company	54	55.5	54	55	2,916,700
65.5	33	Philippine National Bank	46.5	46.5	46.5	46.5	125,600
68	41	Philippine Savings Bank	62	63.5	62	63.5	3,000
39.57	14.57	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	25	25	24.75	25	1,040,900
90	47	Security Bank Corp.	72.5	73.5	72.5	73	14,100
66	42.53	Union Bank of the Philippines	55	56.5	55	55	45,100
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
2.06	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.86	2.06	1.86	2.02	21,461,000
16.25	1.88	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	10.5	10.5	10.25	10.5	214,400
1.6	0.4	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.88	0.88	0.82	0.82	200,000
42	28	First Metro Investment Corp.	42	42	41	41	1,700
1,730.00	1,555.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,715.00	1,730.00	1,715.00	1,730.00	780
5	2.95	Nat'l Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.15	3.3	3.15	3.3	2,232,000
3.1	1	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	1.88	1.88	1.88	1.88	130,000
1,005.00	220	The Philippine Stock Exchange, Inc	770	780	760	780	74,930
2,250.00	1,945.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,240.00	2,245.00	2,240.00	2,240.00	7,410
1.94	1.3	iVantage Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	420,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	4.9	4.95	4.9	4.95	3,006,000
70	42.5	First Gen Corp.	62	63	61.5	63	889,800
92	41	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	78.5	78.5	78	78.5	426,000
15	8.8	Manila Water Company Inc.	13.5	13.75	13.5	13.75	2,453,200
116	16	Manila Electric Company A	95	98	95	96.5	130,700
118	25	Manila Electric Company B	99	99	96.5	97	311,900
7	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.4	9,386,000
6.5	3.75	Petron Corp.	5.4	5.5	5.3	5.3	5,067,000
14.75	6.7	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	7.8	8	7.5	7.5	95,000
1.9	0.92	Trans-Asia Oil & Energy Dev't Corp.	1.2	1.22	1.16	1.22	232,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	2.95	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	618,000
2.95	1.86	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2.06	2.06	2	2	70,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	24	24	24	24	3,000
61	31.5	Jollibee Foods Corp.	51	52	51	52	1,277,900
1.96	0.78	RFM Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	450,000
4.05	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.24	2.24	2.2	2.2	35,000
80	59	San Miguel Corp. A	62	62.5	62	62.5	30,100
88	60	San Miguel Corp. B	64	64.5	63.5	64.5	940,700
0.66	0.22	Swift Foods Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	100,000
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	16.25	16.5	16	16	3,087,900
0.55	0.2	Vitarich Corp.	0.39	0.39	0.37	0.37	100,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	1.59	EEI Corp.	4	4.35	4	4.35	2,857,000
21.5	6	Federal Chemicals Inc.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	15,000
9.2	4.5	Holcim Philippines Inc.	6.6	7.3	6.6	7.1	3,416,000
7	1.28	Republic Cement Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.3	1,030,000
2	0.27	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	0.99	1.12	0.99	1.1	139,080,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.1	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	4.35	4.4	4.3	4.4	505,000
1.46	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1	1	1	1	220,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.1	Picop Resources Inc.	0.35	0.37	0.34	0.36	14,470,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	1.8	A. Soriano Corp.	3.1	3.15	3.1	3.15	25,000
0.17	0.025	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.085	0.0875	0.085	0.0875	20,300,000
1.28	0.21	APC Group Inc.	0.59	0.61	0.58	0.59	11,420,000
3.6	1.4	ATN Holdings Inc. A	3.25	3.4	3.25	3.25	4,445,000
3.7	1.48	ATN Holdings Inc. B	3.5	3.55	3.3	3.55	1,757,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	6.6	6.7	6.5	6.5	2,748,000
0.021	0.0075	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.012	72,200,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	4.5	4.75	4.5	4.65	16,986,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	1.98	2.06	1.98	2.04	1,069,000
590	352.08	Ayala Corp.	455	467.5	455	465	254,990
14.5	7.04	Bacnotan Cons. Industries Inc.	12	12	12	12	5,800
5.8	1.06	Benpres Holdings Corp.	4.25	4.35	4.2	4.2	8,255,000
10.25	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	7.8	8.1	7.8	8.1	3,007,000
6.9	1	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	3.85	3.85	3.75	3.85	80,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	435,000
3.55	1.16	House of Investments Inc.	1.82	1.84	1.82	1.84	2,160,000
14.6	5.6	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	9.6	9.6	9.6	9.6	86,000
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.62	1.64	1.62	1.64	109,000
0.8	0.205	MEDCO Holdings Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	50,000
11.5	0.38	Multitech Investments Corp.	4.8	4.85	4.65	4.65	2,971,000
8.2	2.8	PAL Holdings Inc.	5.7	5.9	5.7	5.8	308,000
452.5	206.2	SM Investments Corp.	350	355	347.5	355	116,240
0.73	0.125	Sinophil Corp.	0.35	0.36	0.34	0.34	4,620,000
1.6	0.85	South China Resources Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.38	1.38	130,000
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc	0.34	0.36	0.34	0.34	3,130,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	0.78	A Brown Company Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	6,000
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings, Inc	7	7.1	6.5	7	119,000
19.25	11.04	Ayala Land Inc.	14	14	13.75	13.75	15,139,400
1.88	0.99	Belle Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.14	1.14	818,000
2.9	1.3	Cityland Development Corp.	1.6	2	1.6	2	30,000
0.86	0.29	Crown Equities Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.61	0.61	690,000
0.99	0.47	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	8,780,000
0.47	0.048	Ever Gotesco Res. and Hold'gs Inc.	0.23	0.24	0.23	0.23	14,230,000
1.48	0.4	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.1	1.12	1.1	1.1	3,603,000
2.44	1.07	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.5	1.52	1.48	1.5	35,821,000
1.12	0.24	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.61	0.62	0.61	0.62	15,000,000
4.4	1.56	Megaworld Corp.	3.35	3.45	3.25	3.4	26,604,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	3.95	3.95	3.85	3.9	51,000
0.7	0.125	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.35	420,000
0.87	0.32	Phil. Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.41	0.44	0.41	0.43	690,000
9.2	1.1	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	48,000
23	12.25	Robinson Land Corp.	17.5	17.75	17.5	17.75	7,566,200
5.9	1.37	SM Development Corp.	3.65	3.75	3.65	3.75	476,000
13.5	6.16	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11	11.5	11	11.5	10,083,000
3.25	0.8	Shang Properties Inc.	2.55	2.7	2.55	2.7	557,000
0.49	0.08	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.27	0.28	0.26	0.26	1,030,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc	5	5.2	5	5.2	3,200,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	15.75	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	31.5	31.5	31	31	16,200
11.75	8.7	GMA Network Inc.	9.6	9.7	9.6	9.7	247,000
1.14	0.91	Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	470,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	1.22	1.26	1.22	1.26	681,000
1,445.00	975	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,315.00	1,315.00	1,305.00	1,310.00	101,000
2,820.00	1,900.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,540.00	2,600.00	2,540.00	2,590.00	172,450
7.9	3.7	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	1,081,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	7,890,000
11.5	2	IPVG Corp.	8.8	9	8.7	8.8	387,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.032	0.032	0.031	0.032	22,700,000
29.5	8	Imperial Resources Inc. A	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	300
2.9	1.6	Ionics Inc.	1.64	1.66	1.64	1.66	45,000
0.32	0.043	Island Info and Technology Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.175	0.185	9,790,000
0.0725	0.027	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.05	0.05	0.049	0.05	69,200,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Grp Int'l. Inc.	2.6	2.6	2.48	2.5	2,176,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
1.92	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.68	1.78	1.68	1.76	1,087,000
34.5	14.75	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	32	32	30.5	31	1,990,200
2.16	0.93	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	1.66	1.66	1.66	1.66	2,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.56	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	3.05	3.05	2.9	3	322,000
6	2.16	Manila Jockey Club Inc.	4.75	4.75	4.5	4.75	10,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	800,000
		EDUCATION					
950	650	Far Eastern University Inc.	820	820	820	820	2,020
3.7	2.65	IPeople Inc.	2.75	2.8	2.75	2.8	177,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
6	1.9	Macroasia Corp.	4.2	4.25	4.2	4.25	168,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	12	12	12	12	81,000
30	9.9	Paxys Inc.	13.5	13.5	12.75	13.25	8,376,000
		MINING					
0.018	0.008	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	38,000,000
7.6	3.6	Apex Mining Company Inc. A	5	5	4.5	4.5	51,000
7.7	3.85	Apex Mining Company Inc. B	4.2	4.2	4.05	4.05	89,000
21.25	7.7	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	12.75	13.5	12.75	13.25	3,523,200
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. A	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	2,000
3.1	0.33	GEOGRACE Resources Philippines Inc.	1.56	1.56	1.5	1.52	42,153,000
0.35	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. A	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	1,600,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. A	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	79,000,000
0.041	0.019	Manila Mining Corp. B	0.022	0.023	0.022	0.023	9,100,000
30	1.2	NIHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	11.5	11.75	11	11	1,308,100
0.021	0.0079	Omico Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	93,600,000
6.4	3.15	Philex Mining Corp.	5.4	5.5	5.2	5.4	6,631,000
43	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	27.5	29	27.5	29	33,400
1.8	0.56	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.2	1.2	3,971,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.38	0.38	0.35	0.36	17,110,000
0.025	0.0095	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. A	0.018	0.02	0.018	0.02	300,700,000
0.027	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. B	0.02	0.022	0.02	0.021	195,000,000
12.75	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	9.4	9.4	9.4	9.4	30,000
0.028	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.019	0.021	0.019	0.02	716,100,000

AVERAGES				VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	862.79	UP	5.15	32,534,950	483,268,110.00
Industrial	4,554.68	UP	81.68	190,303,800	648,881,835.00
Holding Firms	1,808.00	UP	39.32	156,668,030	374,287,215.00
Property	1,476.77	UP	12.59	144,961,600	647,367,795.00
Service	1,552.73	UP	19.52	127,972,170	786,977,755.00
Mining & Oil	5,411.17	UP	81.79	1,508,001,700	201,467,895.00
All Shares Index	2,075.91	UP	23.47		
PSEi	3,251.77	UP	44.83		
GRAND TOTALS				2,160,442,250	3,142,250,605.00

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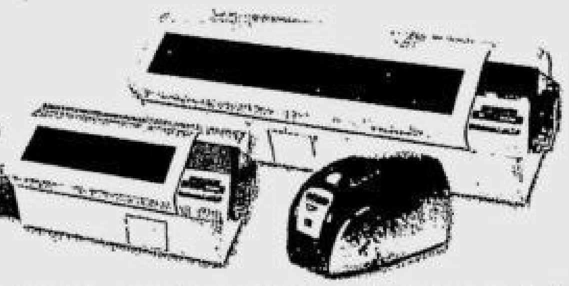

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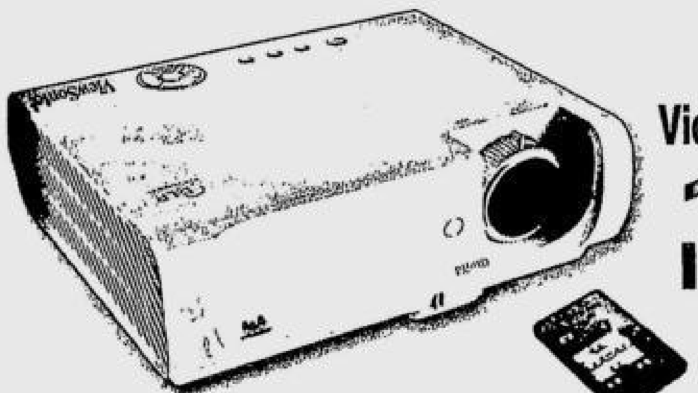

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PAL posts $34.5-M net profit in Q1

By Riza T. Olchondra

PHILIPPINE AIRLINES POSTED AN UNAUDITED net income of $34.5 million from April to June due to higher passenger load factor and effective cost management.

The net income in the first quarter of PAL's 2007-2008 fiscal year was 101 percent higher than the figure for the same period in the previous year.

"For the full year we may realize an increase of about 10 percent compared to last year, so we are on track to record our fourth year of profitability," PAL president Jaime Bautista told reporters.

The airline, controlled by tycoon Lucio Tan, recorded a net income of $140.3 million for its 2006-2007 fiscal year ending March 31, 2007.

For the April-to-June period, the airline ferried two million passengers, or up 7 percent from a year ago.

PAL also made 5,771 flights for the quarter, an increase of 5 percent from last year.

Passenger load factor rose to 82.18 percent, PAL's highest in more than a decade, from 79.32 percent a year ago.

This pushed total revenues for PAL's 41 international and domestic destinations to $373.4 million, 13 percent higher than the year-ago figure.

Expenses for the April-June quarter increased by 8 percent to $338.9 million due to high jet fuel prices but the airline trimmed maintenance costs by $5.7 million, spending only $42.9 million for the quarter. For this, PAL credited Lufthansa Teknik, which handles the flag carrier's maintenance requirements.

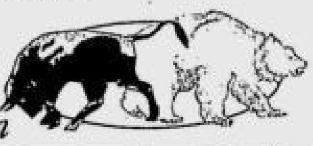
"The numbers confirm our capability to sustain profitability and validates our decision to exit receivership as soon as possible. We are in the final process of securing SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission) approval for this. We are just documenting agreements with some creditors and we do not foresee any major problems over the next few weeks," Bautista said.

He added that all profits would be plowed back into operations as PAL upgrades its systems and takes delivery of new A320s to serve regional and domestic routes and free up its larger planes for long-haul flights.

Bautista said PAL might increase flights to high-demand destinations such as the United States, Korea and China. It is considering flying to India and New Zealand over the next two to four years. It may also revisit plans to expand in Japan and reopen flights to Europe when its extended-range aircraft are delivered in 2009.

Bernanke to the rescue

MR. BEARBULL



Ron Nathan

I JUST READ A REPORT IN SEVERAL NEWSpapers that the Americans have just published a report about the sex life of the elderly. So the editor asked me to carry out a similar report on friends of my age. The assignment turned out more difficult than I had imagined. Most of them were dead, some were in wheelchairs, and others had suffered strokes, heart attacks or Parkinson's disease. Of the remainder still able to walk, most had Alzheimer's and it looked as if I was the last man standing. Eventually, I found three in reasonable condition so we went to the golf course and indulged in fourplay.

I have an American friend, let's call him Joe, who is the reincarnation of Don Juan and is therefore an inveterate woman chaser. He keeps incredibly fit and spends two hours a day in the gym. He was in the middle of doing 100 push ups when I said to him, "The girl left 10 minutes ago."

A salesman from a mortgage refinance company called my wife at random and asked, "Do you have a second mortgage? "No", she replied. "How about a first mortgage?" "Nope." Would you like to consolidate all your debts? "Don't have any." "How about a credit card for home improvements?" "I have just redone the entire house and paid cash." In desperation he asked, "Are you looking for a husband?"

Horse flu has broken out in Horsetralia.

My wife has gone to the beauty parlor, a place where women curl up and dye.

Going by taxi to Makati, I thought the taxi driver had taken a wrong turn so I tapped him on the shoulder. He screamed, lost control of the car, nearly hit a bus, went up the sidewalk and almost hit an old lady. I apologized saying, "I didn't think a little tap would scare you so much." He replied, "It is not your fault. Today is my first day as a taxi driver. For the past 20 years, I have been driving a funeral van."

* * *

It looks as if we might have seen the bottom, judging by the reaction of Wall Street and all other financial centers.

Bernanke pulled a rabbit out of a hat when he lowered the interbank discount rate and released an almost limitless amount of liquidity, together with the European Central Bank and other central banks outside Asia. He even added extra funds to Citibank and Bank of America so that they could rescue two large mortgage companies, which might otherwise go bankrupt. This is something that he cannot afford to let happen because of the ensuing fallout in the stock market. He might also include JP Morgan and other banks if they need help.

He has done this rather than lower the FED rate, which would stoke inflation and encourage more people to apply for mortgages. Most investors expect him to cut the rate to 5 percent or possibly 4.75 percent on Sept. 18 when the FED next meets but I doubt whether he will do this. If he fails to cut rates, there will be disappointment and probably another selldown. That is why I remain cautious. I am not alone. A survey of 258 members of the National Association for Business Economies said their main concern was no longer terrorism but subprime loan defaults and excessive indebtedness. Automakers and credit cards will be the next to suffer from the credit crunch.

One of the problems facing financial analysts is that so much information is unknown. It is rumored that only 2,000 of the 9,000 hedge funds have received redemption notices. I would have expected the figure to be much higher but even if it is true, then 2,000 hedge funds will be in the process of selling whatever assets they can in the next month or by yearend. Some hedge funds allow 45 days redemption but most require six months and there is also a lockup period of at least a year. So waiting for the other shoe to drop might be a drawn out painful process. I expect Wall Street to remain volatile at least until the end of September, then it might recover as October to early January is seasonally a good time to invest.

The US economy appears to be doing quite well and housing sales rose 2.8 percent but this was probably due to price-cutting and will probably not be repeated in the months ahead. Housing starts are down and so are asking prices. What is surprising is that durable goods rose by 5.4 percent, far exceeding economists' forecasts of 1.4 percent. Company profits in the second quarter were well ahead of expectations but are expected to slow as the year progresses.

The Hong Kong market has been going crazy and with some justification. The Chinese government is allowing one town to implement a pilot scheme. Anyone there with an account in Bank of China can buy shares in the Hong Kong market. This is extremely attractive because the shares in the CSI 300 index, currently at a record high, are selling at 52 times earnings, largely due to unmarketability. In Hong Kong, there are no such problems, liquidity is almost infinite and shares sell at only 18 times earnings. If the scheme is implemented nationwide, it is expected that 17 trillion yuan ($2.2 trillion) will move into the HANG SENG. JP Morgan upgraded Hong Kong from underweight to overweight.

There is little to report in the local market. Imports rose 3.8 percent last month after declining the month before and this is being construed as meaning that in six months time, there will be an increase in exports. This is probably true as we mainly assemble electronics and computers chips and re-export them. Our true exports are minimal compared to Japan, Taiwan and South Korea.

The strength of the peso is causing problems for exporters, families relying on remittance (now worth 20 percent less than last year) and, in particular, call centers. For example, PAXYS shares have fallen from P30 to P13 and ETELECARE lost one of its major clients, DELL. It may defer its plan to list here, as profits will fall 32 percent in the second half.

There has been an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the UK. Tony Blair opened his mouth and put his foot in it.

The local market held up well yesterday, ignoring the 52-point decline in the DOW, but turnover is dropping steadily and was about half the six-month daily average. A rising market, accompanied by low turnover, is not impressive and a considerable volume was in second and third liners.

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Stocks up 1.4% on bargain hunting

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 1.4-PERCENT higher yesterday as investors chased bargains after returning from a three-day weekend, dealers said.

They said the market played catch-up to gains in Asian markets Monday which cheered Wall Street's advance at the end of last week. Philippine financial markets were closed Monday for a public holiday.

The composite index added 44.83 points to 3,251.77, off the day's high of 3,261.28. It was the index's best finish since Aug. 14 when it settled at 3,263.56.

Out of 148 stocks traded, 74 advanced, 42 declined, while 32 closed flat.

A total of 2.1 billion shares worth P3.2 billion were traded.

"Buying was limited to the bluest of the blue, there is now a flight to quality issues," said Jose Vistan of AB Capital Securities. "The selloff in recent weeks was overdone and this created buying opportunities." News overnight that existing US home sales fell for the fifth straight month in July prevented investors from buying more stocks and push the market higher, said Vistan.

"It's still cheap to buy at current levels, but the enthusiasm was capped because investors could not totally ignore the new data that came in."

Investor sentiment is expected to improve though as most investors have already digested what happened in recent weeks, said Astro del Castillo of First Grade Holdings. *AFP*

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Customs bureau steps up fight against fraud

By Michelle V. Remo

MORALES

THE BUREAU OF CUSTOMS said a dry run of the plan to fully automate its auditing processes would take place in October—a move that would curb corruption by doing away with face-to-face transactions between customs examiners and importers.

Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales told the INQUIRER that the automated system would be tested at the Port of Manila in October. The system will then be set up in all the ports around the country, following the success of the dry run in Manila.

"The only way you can fight corruption is through automation," Morales said in a recent roundtable discussion with INQUIRER's business reporters and editors.

Morales said that with the pilot-testing of the fully automated BOC system in October, the country's Customs bureau will be the first among Asean (Association of Southeast Asian nations) members to go fully electronic.

The Customs chief explained that under a fully automated system, an importer will have to notify the BOC of an incoming shipment electronically. The importer and the assigned customs personnel will transact through electronic means using a computer. Payment of duties will also be done online.

The BOC shall also use an X-ray machine to check contents of a shipment, veering away from the current practice of manual inspection. This will help address smuggling, Morales said.

He also said the BOC now has 15 X-ray machines, and needs 15 more to equip the ports that do not have one. The first 15 machines were bought using official development assistance from foreign lenders, he said.

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No such thing as free dinner

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

OH, NO. PLEASE TELL US IT'S NOT TRUE, boss!

That, of course, refers to the coffee shop talk that, during her official trip to London early this year, the Lola at the Palace attended a formal sit-down dinner hosted by BAT.

Surely, nothing is wrong with the President of the Philippines attending an expensive party paid for by companies like BAT, or the British American Tobacco.

Never mind that BAT, while it is the world's second largest cigarette company, is a late-comer in the Philippines, which is the world's 12th largest cigarette market.

It's just that, a few months later, we find out that BAT all along needed a big favor from the Arroyo administration.

It involves huge tax breaks for the "Pall Mall" brand of cigarettes, owned by BAT, made here by La Suerte Cigar and Cigarette Factory.

As the plot now unravels, it turns out that, as early as January 2006, La Suerte had already asked the BIR to lower the excise tax on the BAT-brand "Pall Mall."

It was not just a little cut. La Suerte wanted the BIR to reduce the excise tax from P25 per pack to an amazing P5.60 per pack.

That was a cut of 80 percent!

Now word goes around that, at the time BAT hosted the dinner in London for the Lola, the BIR was about to come out with the ruling denying the tax cut for "Pall Mall."

My info is that the BIR had to delay its ruling, supposedly in deference to the dinner hosted by BAT for the Lola during her official visit to London.

Not only that, the BIR was forced to hold off the ruling upon the badgering of certain Cabinet members, using the international "reputation" of the Lola as excuse.

* * *

Subsequently, BIR nevertheless stuck to its decision that the P26 per pack excise tax on "Pall Mall" would stay.

The BIR noted that, prior to the La Suerte move for the tax cut, the Duty Free Philippines already paid for tax of P25 per pack on the same "Pall Mall" brand.

Under the law, the BIR could not reduce the excise tax.

Still, somebody at the DOF ordered the BIR to conduct a survey of the retail prices of the La Suerte-made "Pall Mall" with a small sampling of supermarkets.

In a way, the order was to entertain the claim of La Suerte that its "Pall Mall" should be taxed lower than the "blue seal" at Duty Free because of the price difference.

According to BIR insiders, that "somebody" was none other than DOF undersecretary Gaudencio Mendoza.

Mendoza used to work for Rep. Ronald Zamora, who in turn was the executive secretary in the terminated administration of the man named Band ... Wrist Band.

Word in business has it that Mendoza is also the DOF official who wrote the recent DOF ruling, reversing the BIR on the "Pall Mall" tax case.

In effect, the DOF ruling lowered the excise tax by about 80 percent.

Here is the catch: Neither the DOF nor the BIR wants to release to the public copies of the supposed new ruling.

And nobody can still say whether or not this big tax break for BAT's "Pall Mall" brand has anything to do with that London dinner for the Lola.

* * *

To justify the huge tax reduction on a foreign brand of cigarettes, some DOF officials are said to be blaming former BIR commissioner Jose Mario Buñag.

Buñag was forced to resign last June, after the DOF insisted that he should meet the DOF-set collection targets for the BIR, which were nevertheless subsequently reduced also by the DOF.

That was, of course, well, after Buñag resigned!

Anyway, based on the black prop from the DOF, a few days before he resigned, Buñag supposedly wrote a memo reversing the Office of the Commissioner (i.e., himself) in the "Pall Mall" case.

I personally talked to Buñag, and he said that such a claim was "nothing but a big bold-faced lie."

He noted that the case was already on appeal with the DOF, meaning it was already out of the hands of the BIR commissioner.

He also said that, even assuming that he wrote the supposed memo, the DOF should rule that the memo was ineffective, since everything was already up to the DOF.

But why does the DOF still refuse to release to the public copies of its ruling on the "Pall Mall" case?

I mean, really, what justification did it use? The plot thickens, boss!

* * *

Can you believe that? Only 48 percent passed the nursing board examination. What kind of schools for nursing do we have, anyway?

An analysis of the percentage of the successful examinees of each nursing school, both the university-based and the fly-by-night kinds, should be an interesting material for the CHEd.

That's the Commission on Higher Education, which licenses and supervises the college level institutions in this country.

In that connection, we actually have a new dental law, RA 9484, signed by President Macapagal-Arroyo early this year.

Actually, it regulates the "practice of dentistry" which, aside from dentists, should include the so-called hygienists and technicians.

The new law just amended the old dentistry law called RA 4419, but it also did away with an important feature of the old law.

Under the old law, the CHEd was required to have a "council" of advisers, who are considered experts in dental education.

To ensure that the members were all knowledgeable on dental education, the old law specified who they should be. The dean of the UP dental school, for instance, automatically sat in the council.

One of the major tasks of the council was to monitor the different dental schools in the country, recommending ways on how to upgrade them, or even at times pointing out which ones should be closed down.

It's no longer the case in the new law. Apparently, somebody important in the dental profession lobbied hard in Congress to get rid of the council. Hmm.

That's one less problem for the substandard dental schools, right?

CURRENCIES

August 28, 2007

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.732815	1.000000	46.7650
Japan	Yen	0.006321	0.008625	0.4033
United Kingdom	Pound	1.474791	2.012500	94.1146
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.093915	0.128157	5.9933
Switzerland	Franc	0.609207	0.831324	38.8769
Canada	Dollar	0.695271	0.948767	44.3691
Singapore	Dollar	0.482083	0.657851	30.7644
Australia	Dollar	0.606987	0.828295	38.7352
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.943962	2.652731	124.0550
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.195396	0.266638	12.4693
Brunei	Dollar	0.480503	0.655695	30.6636
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000078	0.000107	0.0050
Thailand	Baht	0.022445	0.030628	1.4323
United Arab Emirates	Dirham	0.199519	0.272264	12.7324
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.364600	63.8155
Korea	Won	0.000781	0.001066	0.0499
China	Yuan**	0.096928	0.132268	6.1855
Argentina	Peso	0.231354	0.315706	14.7640
Brazil	Real	0.373885	0.510204	23.8597
Denmark	Kroner	0.134385	0.183382	8.5759
India	Rupee	0.017926	0.024462	1.1440
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.210519	0.287274	13.4344
Mexico	New Peso	0.066214	0.090355	4.2255
New Zealand	Dollar	0.526221	0.718081	33.5811
Norway	Kroner	0.125689	0.171515	8.0209
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012045	0.016437	0.7687
South Africa	Rand	0.101449	0.138437	6.4740
Sweden	Kroner	0.106680	0.145575	6.8078
Syria	Pound	0.014299	0.019512	0.9125
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022214	0.030313	1.4176
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000341	0.000466	0.0218

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Aug. 27, 2007

* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of Aug. 27, 2007

RP property market insulated from US subprime crisis

By Daxim L. Lucas

REAL ESTATE DEVELOPER CENTURY Properties Inc. expects demand for its projects to remain firm despite the outbreak of the subprime credit crisis in the United States which has threatened to squeeze off funding for property markets worldwide.

In a press briefing, company chairman Jose Eduardo B. Antonio said his firm is counting on the changing nature of property buyers which has evolved significantly from the profile of buyers before the 1997 East Asian financial crisis.

"In 1997, most buyers were speculative. They bought [properties] like stocks on the stock market," he said. "Today, most of our buyers are end users."

Amid the subprime credit fears, Century Properties yesterday launched its Gramercy Residences high-end condominium project which will rise in the company's Century City development on Kalayaan Avenue in Makati City.

Antonio justified the timing of the project's launch, saying Century Properties has a "very strong foundation of buyers"—especially from the overseas markets—which it could rely on to see the project through.

"Many of our buyers are expatriate Filipinos or retirees," he said. "Our sales are not affected by the credit concerns abroad."

Prices at the company's Gramercy Residences range from P2.6 million to P18 million, for sizes of 26 square meters for studio units to 160 square meters for three-bedroom loft-type units.

According to Century Properties chief operating officer Jose Victor Antonio, total project cost for the Gramercy Residences is expected to reach P5.5 billion, which would be sourced from internally generated funds.

Designing the residential property is Jon Adams Jerde, a Los Angeles-based architect and urban planner, while Filipino interior designer Chat Fores created interior design themes for unit buyers to choose from.

There are 1,000 residential units that come in flat and loft configurations. Gramercy will have a minimum of 65 floors.

Gramercy's groundbreaking will be held in the fourth quarter of 2007.

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FRESH PERSPECTIVES

service innovations from Insular Life

Insular Life, the Philippines' leading Filipino life insurer draws from its rich heritage as it creates innovations to answer the evolving needs of its number one partner: its policyholders.

These days, innovations are directly associated with technological breakthroughs. Mention the word "innovation" and one would start thinking of mobile phones, computers, mp3 players, and other such devices.

Innovations, however, have more to it than rolling out the latest gadgetry. The word itself means "to introduce something new", such as ideas, practices and methods. From another angle, one could say that to innovate is to look at something with new eyes, with new perspective.

Looking for a fresh perspective is the path that Insular Life, the leading Filipino life insurance company has been doing throughout its almost 100 years. From establishing the first training school in life insurance way back early 50's, to introducing industrial life insurance in 1958 , to creating the system for direct marketing of life insurance products in 1977, Insular Life has had major influences in the development of the life insurance industry.

Today, in the midst of a technologically-driven and digitally connected world, and a steeply competitive life insurance industry, Insular Life continues to stay on its toes in developing new ways to make its clients, whom it fondly refers to as "suki" or valued customer, delightfully remember every Insular Life encounter.

Magandang Araw po sa Inyo!

The traditional Filipino greeting of "Magandang Araw po sa inyo" is not only a greeting but a wish that the person will have a good day. Insular Life adopted this greeting, in what was dubbed "Sa Magandang Pagbati Makikilala ang Insular Life". Although primarily intended as a telephone courtesy program, this has transcended into the company's brand of customer service – the cornerstone of the day-to-day encounter with guests, policyholders, employees and agents. Indeed, at the Insular Life headquarters, visitors are welcomed with "Magandang araw" by every member of the workforce from security and service personnel to the employees and the executives. It evokes warmth and personalized attention that only a customer-oriented Filipino company can provide.

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Dial 876-1-800 for the Magandang Araw experience

The importance of the telephone as a vital means of client connection prompted Insular Life to develop its Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS), or simply, Magandang Araw Insular! Launched in January 2007, this system enables clients to get more information about their policy at the touch of a telephone button. To access Magandang Araw Insular, one has to simply dial 876-1-800. General information about Insular Life can be retrieved through this service, such as products, payment facilities, servicing requirements, and service centers. This way, policyholders can access company services anytime of the day. Insular Life agents also benefit from this service as information about their accounts is just a phone call away. Enrolment is required; users, however, need not worry as a step-by-step guide is provided making every transaction a breeze.

Bar Codes: simplifying bill payment

As consumers ourselves, paying our bills is the least enjoyable chore. More so if paying our bills require remembering account numbers and countless of other information necessary to complete the transaction. This consumer insight inspired the company to adopt bar codes in its premium notices last October 2006. Important customer information is embedded in the bar codes, enabling payment via bank networks easy and error-free.

Love those reward points!

INSULAR LIFE
ilove rewards

Insular Life's Extra Special Policyholders or ESPs, the company's high-end clientele, now look forward to getting bigger points and better rewards under the "I Love Rewards" program. "I Love Rewards" allows ESPs to accumulate points by paying their policy premiums in advance. Corresponding points that ESPs could earn depend on how early they settle their premium payments from the due date. They could use these points to claim gift certificates from partner establishments, or to donate to a charitable institution. "I Love Rewards" is just one of the ways the company pampers Insular Life ESPs. They also get free medical exam, complimentary breakfast at accredited restaurants on their birth month, and an ESP Prestige card which entitles them to discounts and freebies from merchant partners, among others. Insular Life prides itself to be the only insurance company that offers rewards points of such nature, thereby making insurance premium payment a rewarding experience!

A "Deal-liteful" payment scheme

INSULAR LIFE
Premium DEAL-LITE 0%

Continually innovating itself, Insular Life's latest introduction is Premium Deal-lite: Zero % Deferred Payment Offer. The very first of its kind in the life insurance industry, Premium Deal-lite is a unique and convenient payment mode. With this facility, policyholders may pay their premiums in three monthly installments, at zero interest. This payment mode, which took effect on August 1, is available for initial and renewal payments with a minimum transaction of P3,000, on or before the policy's due date. Accredited credit cards include Bankard, Equitable Card Network, Bank of the Philippine Islands, Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation.

The Premium deal-lite payment facility enables policyholders to commit themselves to insurance protection or a savings program without worrying about disrupting their cash flow. New or existing policyholders can pay the premium of their chosen policies over 3 monthly payments via their credit cards without incurring finance charges.

Innovation takes a knack for seeing what others do not see and taking the road up the explored path. Insular Life has walked on many new paths and has gained for itself and its policyholders much from these explorations. As the company celebrates its 97th anniversary in November 2007, it shall be eagerly looking ahead, for other unexplored paths, for new and better things for its valued "suki", always with a fresh perspective.

Foreign chambers promote retirement industry

ECCP leading effort to make RP a prime healthcare destination

By Ronnel W. Domingo

FOREIGN BUSINESS CHAMBERS have teamed up to help promote the Philippines as a second home to foreign retirees, as well as entice investors to develop retirement facilities here.

Henry Schumacher, executive vice president of the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, said the ECCP has formed a coalition with the American, Japanese and Korean business chambers to position the Philippines as a healthcare destination.

Also, he said ECCP was cooperating with the German Technical Cooperation under a three-year public-private sector partnership to spur development in the provinces and speed up the process of making the Philippines a retirement center for foreigners.

"We believe that the services sector is (a strong point) of the Philippines and that it could compete internationally in terms of the 'second home' concept," Schumacher said.

He said that since the target market comprised of retirees from Japan, Korea, Europe and North America, the business chambers decided to help the Philippine government in the campaign.

"We are working with the tourism and foreign affairs departments as well as the Bureau of Immigration and the Philippine Retirement Authority," Schumacher said.

"We want foreigners to have access to long-stay visas with the least government bureaucratic process," he said.

In a statement, Schumacher said the business chambers would be doing a lot of ground work wherein they would look at suitable locations, market them to potential investors, and eventually have those destinations certified according to international standards.

Schumacher said the ECCP was currently training its sights on some locations, such as Cebu, Batangas and Tagaytay.

Schumacher added that as tourist arrivals increase, the health and wellness sectors have to be packaged well to take advantage of the growth.

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SHILOH INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION 503 ALPAP II Bldg., Trade St., MBP, Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Sunwuk Choi	Technical Consultant
PANKOREA CORP. Unit 1204, Pacific Coast Plaza, 1st Villarmar St., Tambo, Paranaque City	Unju Seo	Operations Manager
PANKOREA CORP. Unit 1204, Pacific Coast Plaza, 1st Villarmar St., Tambo, Paranaque City	Young Ho Lee	General Manager
SHILOH INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION 503 ALPAP II Bldg., Trade St., MBP, Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Chang Yeon Ji	Technical Consultant
K2 TOP CORPORATION Unit 112 CLS Bldg., Kaunlaran Village, Dagat-Dagatan Ave., Caloocan City	Min Young Lee	Marketing Manager
PHILIPPINE NATIONAL BANK (assigned at I Flex Solutions) PNB Financial Center, D. Macapagal Blvd., Pasay City	Vamsi Ratna Vijai Gowd Suragani	Report Specialist
HIM ALONE LTD. CO. 849 Juan Luna St., Binondo, Manila	Baoli Chen	Creative Manager
HIM ALONE LTD. CO. 849 Juan Luna St., Binondo, Manila	Yanzhi Chen	Advertising Manager
CEMEX STRATEGIC PHILIPPINES, INC. 25/F Petron Mega Plaza Bldg., 358 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Miguel Roberto Sanchez Estrada	Technology Vice President
DIALMAGIC INC. 1802, 88 Corporate Center cor. Valero St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Eliyahu Ben Tov	Security Consultant
DIALMAGIC INC. 1802, 88 Corporate Center cor. Valero St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Asaf Shoshana	Marketing Consultant
ESPA-FIL IMPORT & EXPORT CORP. 5 Cordillera St., Mandaluyong City	Rafael Martin Castellanos	General Manager
SURE VARIETY TRADING, INC. Rm. 602 Juhana Bldg., 907 S. Reyes St., Sta. Cruz, Manila	Yubao Li	Sales Representative
B'& M GLOBAL SERVICES MANILA INC. 14/F Net One Center, 26th St., cor. 3rd Ave., Crescent Park West, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City	Martin Robert Telfer	Interim Executive Director
PHILIPS MEDICAL SYSTEMS NEDERLAND B.V. 48/F PBCom Tower, Ayala Ave. cor. Rufino St., Makati City	Andries Francois Engelbrecht	International Project Manager
TOYO CONSTRUCTION CO. LTD. 4/F Princess Bldg., 104 Esteban St., Legaspi Village, Makati City	Shoichiro Miura	Deputy Project Manager
ACCENTURE, INC. MSE Bldg., Ayala Ave., Makati City	Choon Sing Lim	Project Lead
CITIBANK, N.A. 8741 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Lili Yao	Credit Analyst
E-WORLD TRAVEL & TOURS PHIL. CORP. 10/F Pearl of the Orient Tower, Roxas Blvd., Manila	Hae Sun Kang	Assistant Operation Manager
SEOJUNEKOREA, INC. Rm. 402 Executive Center, Adriatico St., Malate, Manila	Yong Nam Han	Marketing Assistant
PHILIPPINE CHINESE EDUCATION RESEARCH CENTER, INC. 1253 J. Abad Santos Ave., Tondo, Manila	Hua Dong	Mandarin Language Teacher
HENKEL ASIA PACIFIC SERVICE CENTRE 2907-2908 29/F, 6801 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Jeffrey Ray Bell	Manager North American SSC Migration
PHILKOSA SEA & AIR FREIGHT SERVICES, INC. G/F Salud-Dizon Bldg., No. 5 MIA Rd., Tambo, Paranaque City	Jong Chul Kim	Assistant Marketing Manager

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

RAYMUNDO G. AGRAVANTE
OIC-Regional Director

The DOLE-NCR will hold a Regional Consultation and Action Planning on August 30, 2007. Interested employers/companies and labor groups are invited to participate. You may call 3392016, 3035923 for more details.

(PDI - Aug. 29, 2007)

Gov't rejects . . .

From page B1

weeks ago.

Bids for the three-month government securities reached P3.5 billion, more than the government's debt offering of P1 billion.

The rate for the 182-day bills hit P4.805 percent, higher by 4 basis points form the 4.765 percent recorded in the previous auction. Tenders for the six-month government securities amounted to P4.1 billion, marking an over-subscription from the debt offering of only P1.5 billion.

Tan said the results of yesterday's auction showed investors' preference for shorter-dated instruments. Analysts said left-over jitters from the US subprime market have made investors wary about longer-term investments.

However, the finance official said both the equities and the fixed-income markets were gradually recovering from the US subprime market scare and were beginning to normalize.

But he also said that the SDA (special depository accounts) facility made available by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas was still competing with government securities.

Under the SDA facility, trust departments of banks were allowed to directly deposit funds with the BSP. The rates offered by the BSP are higher than yields from government securities of comparable maturities.

The SDA facility is a measure implemented by the BSP to help mop up excess liquidity in the system that can fuel inflation.

Erratum

In the ad for the seminar "Tax Amnesty Law: Knowing There is a Choice and Making the Right One" released by Isla Lipana & Co. on August 26, 2007, the following correction should be made: "*Nelson M. Aspe is the BIR Deputy Commissioner for Operations.*" For inquiries, call Baby Bibat at 459 2048.

Republic of the Philippines
CEBU PORT AUTHORITY
CIP Complex, Serging Osmena Boulevard, North Reclamation Area, 6000 Cebu City
E-mail : cpa@cpa.mozcom.com
Telephone : +63 3 2 2321461 to 63 • +63 3 2 2316856 to 57
Fax No. : +63 32 2316848

AN INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY/APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Cebu Port Authority, North Reclamation Area, Cebu City, invites accredited and duly registered contractors to participate in the public bidding of the following projects:

1. **NAME OF PROJECT: REPAIR OF PAVEMENT @ BERTHS 24-27, PORT OF CEBU**
   - A. **Scope of Work:**
     - a) Scraping of Existing Asphalt Pavement and Disposal (A=7,143sqm)
     - b) Forms and Rebars for Dowels and Spikes
     - c) Concrete Pouring (Ave T=0.25m)
     - d) Supply and Spreading of Concrete Bonding Epoxy (Sikadur 732/eq.)
     - e) Concrete Cutting, Asphalt Sealing and Curing
     - f) Supply, Spreading and Compaction of Bituminous Prime Coat and Bituminous Concrete Surface Course (A = 8346 sq.m.)
   - B. **Classification:** Small B for Roads
   - C. **Equipment Requirements:**

1 unit	Bulldozer (D6D 140 fly Hp)	Owned/Leased
1 unit	Backhoe (0.40 cap.)	Owned
2 units	Dump Truck 10W	Owned
1 unit	Air Compressor (175 cfm) w/2 units jackhammer	Owned
1 unit	Bar Cutter	Owned
1 unit	Electric Drill	Owned
1 unit	Generator Set (10 kva)	Owned
2 units	Concrete Vibrator	Owned
1 unit	Concrete Screeder	Owned

   - D. **Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) :** P19,107,957.34

2. **NAME OF PROJECT: REPAIR OF DAMAGED PAVEMENT, DRAINAGE SYSTEM AND SIDEWALK @ E.S. BACLIG STREET, PORT OF CEBU**
   - A. **Scope of Work:**
     - a) Repair of Damaged Pavement
       - a-1) Demolition / Excavation and Disposal
       - a-2) Compact Base Course Materials
       - a-3) Concreting of Pavement (0.30m thk.) 3500psi @ 14 days, Cutting, Curing and Asphalt Sealing
     - b) Repair of Drainage System
       - b-1) Declogging of Drainage System (54 manholes)
       - b-2) Replacement of Damaged Manhole Cover
       - b-3) Provision of Additional Manholes and Laying of New RCCP
     - c) Repair of Sidewalk (along highway) Total Length - 1426L.M.
       - c-1) Demolition of Existing Zocalo including Pedestal of Existing Lamp Post and Disposal
       - c-2) Removal of Unsuitable Materials Stockpile along Sidewalk and Disposal
       - c-3) Supply / Backfill and Compact Base Course
       - c-4) Pouring of Concrete for Sidewalk Including Damaged Curb
   - B. **Classification:** Small B for Drainage and Flood Control
   - C. **Equipment Requirements:**

1 unit	Backhoe with Breaker (320 C 138 fly Hp)	Owned/Leased
1 unit	Backhoe (0.90 sq.m. cap)	Owned/Leased
1 unit	Dump Truck (10 cu.m. cap.)	Owned
1 unit	Road Grader	Owned/Leased
1 unit	Road Roller (Vibro 10M.T. cap.)	Owned/Leased
1 unit	Water Truck	Owned/Leased
1 unit	Plate Compactor	Owned
2 units	Concrete Vibrator	Owned
1 unit	Concrete Screeder	Owned
1 unit	Concrete Cutter	Owned
1 unit	Flat Truck	Owned
1 unit	Bar Cutter	Owned
1 unit	185 cpm Air Compressor with 2 jackhammers	Owned
1 unit	Backhoe (0.50 cu.m. cap.)	Owned
1 unit	One Bagger Concrete Mixer	Owned
1 unit	Walk-in Road Roller (IT cap.)	Owned
1 unit	Boom Truck	Owned

   - D. **Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC):** P6,400,804.50

Source of Funding : **CPA Corporate Fund**
Cost of Prequalification or Eligibility Statement : **Project No. 1 - P1,000.00**
Project No. 2 - P500.00
Issuance of Prequalification or Eligibility Statement : **August 29 - September 7, 2007**
Deadline for Submission of duly accomplished Prequalification or Eligibility Statement : **September 14, 2007**

Prospective bidders shall submit to the BAC Chairman of this office their duly accomplished Prequalification or Eligibility Statements in **HARD/BOOK-BOUND** form. Prequalification or Eligibility Statements submitted other than **Hard/Book-Bound** form shall not be accepted.

Bid securities in the form of surety bond, Callable on Demand, can be secured from the GSIS or other private insurance & surety companies duly accredited by the office of the Insurance Commission.

Prospective bidders shall submit the necessary documents or evidence to prove ownership of equipment and the duly notarized lease contract indicating the brand, serial number, capacity, and present location of equipment being leased.

Prospective bidders are required to present the original copy of Contractor's License/Certificate of Renewal and IAC Classification and Registration for verification/authentication before Pre-qualification or Eligibility Statement shall be issued.

All particulars relative to prequalification, bidding, evaluation of bids, and awards of contract shall be governed by the provisions of R.A. 9184, and other rules and regulations as may be applicable.

CPA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality/defect therein, and to accept such bid as may be deemed most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **MARIO G. TAN**
BAC Chairman

Noted by:

(Sgd.) **ANGELO C. VERDAN**
General Manager

(PDI—August 29, 2007)

To our brave troops: Godspeed!

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

EVERY TIME THE ARMED Forces mounts offensive operations against terrorist organizations like the Abu Sayyaf, all sorts of characters crawl out of the woodwork, here and abroad, to call for a halt to the fighting.

The imam wants to talk things over. The bishop would rather turn the other cheek. The politician prefers economic development.

I caught the most ridiculous proposal on a TV talk show the other night. One of the guests was a lady Ph.D., who shall remain nameless in this column. She was from (where else?) the UP Department of Political Science.

She said that the AFP should pull out of Basilan and Sulu. She claimed the AFP's mandate is to defend the country against foreign invaders. The dirty work of clearing Basilan and Sulu of terrorists should be left to the local police.

I first heard this proposal from a dear friend over a cup of coffee. I reacted so strongly that out friendship almost ended right there and then.

The AFP's mandate in the 1987 Constitution is set out in Article II, Sec. 3, as follows, "Civilian authority is, at all times, supreme over the military. The Armed Forces of the Philippines is the protector of the people and the State. Its goal is to secure the sovereignty of the State and the integrity of the national territory."

I am far from being a constitutionalist. I am just a lousy insurance broker with a mechanical engineering degree. But the above provision is so clear, I venture to say that the ongoing offensives in Basilan and Sulu are well within the AFP's mandate to protect the people and the State.

As in previous aborted offensives, a halt to the ongoing operations will give the Abu Sayyaf a breathing spell. The terrorists will regroup, recruit and rearm. By the time another offensive is mounted, the AFP will be faced with a stronger enemy.

The resulting high casualty rate on both sides can be rightly blamed on the do-gooders, including the imams and the bishops—and a certain lady Ph.D.

Those who call for peace talks should be reminded that it is worldwide policy of democracies never to negotiate with terrorists, including the New People's Army (NPA). Remember the lady member of the Italian parliament who came over during the Father Bossi kidnapping? She kept repeating that she did not come to negotiate with terrorists.

Then, there is the matter of peace talks with the MILF. The MILF wants a stop to the fighting while peace talks are going on. Remember the Korean War? When the North Koreans called for peace talks, they wanted a truce. The United Nations refused. While the talks were going on, U. B-52 Superfortresses leveled every structure in Pyongyang until the North Koreans signed the peace treaty two years later.

The peace talks with the MILF should not confine the AFP to barracks. The AFP's mandate is to "secure the sovereignty of the State and the integrity of the national territory." The Armed Forces are of the entire, not only part of, the Philippines.

Politicians insist a military victory is not the solution to the problem. Only economic development will succeed. But you cannot have economic development without peace.

Chief of Staff Esperon should not waver in his resolve to finish off the Abu Sayyaf, once and for all. Let us wish our brave troops in Basilan and Sulu: Godspeed!

Philippine Amusement & Gaming Corporation
A Global Corporation with a Global Mindset and a Filipino Heart

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

ITB NO.: 08-03-2007

The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) is inviting all interested bidders in its forthcoming public bidding for the project stated hereunder:

Name of Project : Supply, Delivery & Installation of Clustering Equipment for Information Technology Department
Technical Specifications : 10 units Server, 10 units Keyboard, 10 units Monitor & 5 units Storage Device
Approved Budget : Seven Million Seven Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 7,700,000.00)
Source of Fund : Internally Funded

Only suppliers duly registered with PAGCOR shall be allowed to participate in the bidding. Unregistered suppliers must register at the Suppliers Registration & Evaluation Section (SRES), Procurement & Property Department (PPD), 2nd Floor PAGCOR House, 1330 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila, Tel. No. 526-0573.

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Pre-Bid Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	*Schedule*
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	August 28, 2007 – September 19, 2007
2. Pre-Bid Conference	September 07, 2007 (10:30 am)
3. Submission of Bids	September 20, 2007 (2:30 pm)
4. Opening of Bids	September 20, 2007 (2:30 pm onwards)

Complete details of the project are indicated in the **bid documents** which will be available to prospective bidders at the BAC Secretariat Unit, Room 205 2nd Floor PAGCOR House 1330 Roxas Boulevard, Ermita, Manila upon payment of a non-refundable bidding fee of ***Three Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty Pesos (Php 3,850.00).*** In order to secure the documents, bidders should present the Official Receipt issued by our Cashier to the BAC Secretariat.

PAGCOR assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

PAGCOR reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

Please address all communications to the BAC Secretariat Unit, Procurement and Property Department, PAGCOR House, Ermita, Manila, Tel No. 524-3911 or 521-1542 locals 223 or 571.

(Sgd.) **RAFAEL A. FRANCISCO**
Chairperson, BAC 3

(PDI—August 29, 2007)

BCDA

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY

Republic of the Philippines

DAMPE SERVICE AREA OF THE SUBIC-CLARK-TARLAC EXPRESSWAY

The Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) is inviting interested oil companies to participate in the resumption of the bidding for the privatization and development of the approximately 4.214 hectares Dampe Service Area of the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (Sta. 21+730 Subic-bound).

Interested oil companies should submit their Letters of Interest to BCDA and must purchase the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the disposition that outlines, among others, the requirements that will enable the oil company to participate in the bidding for the privatization.

The TOR for the disposition will be ready for distribution to interested proponents from 28 August to 07 September 2007 at the BCDA Corporate Center. A non-refundable cost of the TOR is Php 20,000.00 payable to the BCDA in Cash or Manager's Check.

A conference among interested oil companies is tentatively set on 07 September 2007, at 10:00 a.m., at the BCDA Corporate Center. The objective of the conference is to discuss the Property, the TOR, and other clarifications from interested proponents. Interested proponents will be informed of the final schedule and venue of the conference through contact numbers submitted to the BCDA.

Interested proponents can direct their inquiries to:

VICTOR V. ZABLAN
Chairman, Special Bids and Awards Committee
Bases Conversion and Development Authority
BCDA Corporate Center, 2/F Bonifacio Technology Center, 31st St.
Crescent Park West, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City
Email Address: blandal@bcda.gov.ph or hamonroyo@bcda.gov.ph

or they can contact Ms. Bambie L. Andal or Mr. Hoomer A. Monroyo at telephone numbers 816-6666 loc. 125 and 816-1043.

(Sgd.) **VICTOR V. ZABLAN**
Chairman, Special Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--Aug. 29, 2007)

BCDA

BASES CONVERSION AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY INVITATION FOR PROPOSALS

The Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) is inviting interested proponents to submit proposals for the privatization and development of the 1.2-hectare Expanded Big Delta Lots located in the Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Metro Manila.

Interested proponents may submit their Letters of Interest to BCDA and purchase the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the privatization and development of the property that outlines, among others, the requirements, procedures, methodology and criteria for evaluation and selection of proposals.

The TOR shall be made available to the interested proponents starting August 28, 2007 at a non-refundable cost of Fifty Thousand Pesos (PhP50,000.00), payable to BCDA in cash or manager's check.

A Pre-bid Conference among interested proponents shall be held on September 10, 2007, 2:00 p.m., at the BCDA Operations Conference Room, BCDA Corporate Center, 2nd Floor Bonifacio Technology Center, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City. The objective of the Pre-bid conference is to discuss the property, the TOR and other issues that may be raised by interested proponents.

Interested proponents may direct their inquiries to Ms. Aileen An. R. Zosa or Ms. Bambie L. Andal at telephone numbers 816-6666 loc 110 or 124 or at arzosa@bcda.gov.ph or blandal@bcda.gov.ph

(Sgd.) **VICTOR V. ZABLAN**
Chairman, ADP-3 Committee

(PDI--Aug. 29, 2007)

Creba grand launching on Aug. 30

THE CHAMBER OF REAL ESTATE AND Builder's Association, Inc. (Creba) will have its 2007 Annual Convention Grand Launch on Aug. 30 at the Hotel Intercontinental, Makati City.

According to Editha L. Manansala, convention overall chair, the official unveiling of the event's theme and logo, as well as the introduction of the members of the Convention Team will take place during the launch. The highlight of the launch shall be the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation between Creba and its Convention partners, namely, the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council; Department of Tourism; Board of Investments; Department of Foreign Affairs; Philippine Retirement Authority; and, its media partner, the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

The Annual Creba National Convention traditionally brings together more than 500 of the country's real estate developers, contractors, landowners, professionals and businessmen to emphasize the real estate industry's role in powering the economy and to initiate and create feasible measures on housing and author resolutions which will be presented to the legislative and executive branches of the government to attain the Land Sector's sustainability and growth.

The 2007 National Convention will be held on Oct. 25-57 at the Waterfront Hotel and Casino in Cebu City. This year's theme is "The Land Sector's Quantum Leap to the Future."

Interested parties may contact the Creba Secretariat at telephone numbers 373-2270 to 75.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

Maynila, Pilipinas

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project/Brief Description	Supply, delivery, installation and commissioning of the following Radio Communications Equipment to the BSP Regional Office and Branches in Luzon Area, per BSP scope of work, terms of reference and technical specifications **Package 1** (La Union, Angeles, Batac, Cabanatuan, Dagupan, Legaspi, Lucena, Naga and Tuguegarao) a. 90 units Handheld Radio (packaged with battery pack, extra battery pack, battery charger, antenna, belt clip and headset) b. 11 units Mobile Radio (packaged with gutter-mount antenna, vehicle mounting kit, PTT microphone and power supply) c. 2 units Fixed Base Radio (packaged with PTT microphone, Base mounting kit and power supply) d. 9 units Base Antenna (including cables) e. 3 sets Software and Programming Kit **Package 2** (La Union, Angeles, Batac, Cabanatuan, Dagupan, Legaspi, Lucena and Naga) a. 8 lots Antenna Tower (including cables and accessories) b. 8 sets Lightning Protection System (including cables and accessories) c. 8 units Obstruction Light (including cables and accessories)
Approved Budget for the Contract	Package 1 -P4,689,500.00 2 - 4,250,000.00
Completion Period	Within ninety (90) calendar days after receipt of the approved contract

Prospective bidders should have undertaken a similar requirement awarded and completed from Y2002 to present amounting to at least 50% of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) of the package to be bid. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	Starting 29 August 2007
2. Pre-bid Conference	14 September 2007, 10:30 a.m.
3. Opening of Bids	2 October 2007, 2:00 p.m.
4. Bid Evaluation	These shall be in accordance with the prescribed periods allowed in the Implementing Rules & Regulations (IRR)-A of R.A. No. 9184 dated 10 January 2003.
5. Post-qualification	
6. Notice of Award	

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P2,350.00 (package 1) and P2,130.00 (package 2) to the BSP Cashier.

The BSP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.**
Chairman

(PDI - Aug. 29, 2007)

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PAGCOR B6
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892-5578, 811-4361,
811-4370

KALAW
528-0213, 527-3342

MEGAMALL
635-0219, 635-0220

CPA/MKTG. & SALES MNGRS./EXEC. SEC./STORE MNGRS./LAY-OUT & GRAPHICS ARTIST/IT MNGR./BLDG. MAINTENANCE/BLDG. ADMIN/SECURITY DRIVER/RECEPTIONISTS

Needed for Resto Chain & Condo Corp.
372-6040 / 929-9154 / 0918-5300803
12th Floor, JCRV Inc. Bldg., Tomas Morato Ave.,
cor. Roces Ave., Quezon City

RYKEROLL RENT-A-VAN
07 URVAN ESCAPADE
10 HOURS P1,800 WITH DRIVER
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JAC FILIPINAS PAWNSHOP, INC.
100 C. Palanca St., Quiapo, Manila will sell all unredeemed pledges for the months of Feb & March 2007 on September 18, 2007 at 9AM J-LANUZA-Auctioneer
(PDI--Aug. 29, 2007)

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For ad placements, please call 6350219, 6350220 or 8978808.

ERRATUM

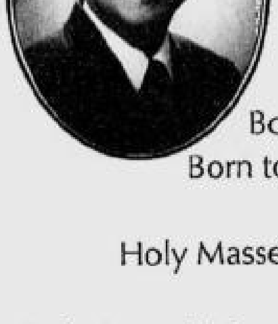
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Second Land Administration and Management Project
LEYTE ONE STOP SHOP (OSS) INDEPENDENT MONITOR

Expressions of Interest (EOIs) of interested consultants could be sent by hand, through mail, or facsimile on or before 5:00 p.m. of September 3, 2007 and not August 15, 2007 as published last Sunday, August 26, 2007.

OBITUARIES

"Eternal
life will
swallow up
that which
can die.
God made
us for this
very reason
and He has
given us the
Spirit as a
guarantee
that we will
live again."

— 2 Corinthians 5:4-5



Lovingly remembered on his
2nd anniversary to eternal life

Atty. Arturo M. Del Rosario

Founder, Del Rosario & Del Rosario Law Offices

Born to Life on August 9, 1922
Born to Eternal Life on August 29, 2005

Holy Masses shall be offered at various churches.

His loving wife Susan, children: Ruben and Cora, Roselle and Joe,
Johnny and Boots, Robert and Malin, Benny and Fely, and
Evita and Graeme and their families, would like to thank
all their relatives, associates
and friends for always remembering
Arthur (Turing) in their prayers.

He gave us so much to be thankful for.

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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and bank-to-bank payments

LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.

Tel. Nos.: 712-3001; 749-3806 to 11

NAME OF DECEASED	PLACE OF VIEWING	INTERMENT/CREMATION	
		DATE & TIME	PLACE
JUDGE ELSIE LIGOT TELAN	Imperial Chapel	September 1, 2007 after the 8:00 a.m. Mass	Holy Cross Mem. Park Novaliches, Q.C.
DONATO "SOR" SORIANO SUYAT, JR.	Chapel - 2	September 1, 2007 2:00 p.m.	Paz Crematorium
AMANDO J. CONTRERAS	Chapel - 8	August 29, 2007 9:00 a.m.	North Cemetery, Manila

BSP sees higher August inflation rate

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG Pilipinas expects an uptick in the inflation rate for August due to the prolonged dry spell and an increase in the minimum wage.

The annual inflation rate in August is expected to range from a low of 2.3 percent to a high of 3.2 percent, versus the 2.6 percent in July, BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said yesterday.

"This forecast band indicates the possibility of positive month-on-month inflation in August on account of higher prices of certain food items due to bad weather, LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) and the implementation of the P12 wage hike," Tetangco said.

The inflation rate measures the average increase in the prices of consumer goods based on a basket of products consumed by a typical Filipino household, such as food, beverage and clothing, as well as water, fuel and electricity.

In July, the inflation rate rose to 2.6 percent from 2.3 percent in June due to sharp increases in food prices, electricity rates and fuel prices. The biggest increases were seen in Metro Manila.

The drought, experienced from the summer months to the early part of August, dampened farm production.

Based on projections of the National Economic Development Authority, the impact of the prolonged dry spell would be felt in the third quarter.

The August issue of The Market Call, a joint capital markets research publication of First Metro Investment Corp. and the University of Asia and the Pacific, indicated that the inflation environment so far this year had been benign.

"The possible threat to significantly higher inflation for the rest of the year would be a further spike in food prices that may be brought about by the drought which fortunately should be coming to an end with the coming of monsoon rains," the research paper said.

But even with oil prices now easing, the FMIC-UA&P paper said the specter of inflation would continue to be a threat although in a lesser degree as anticipated by government economic agencies.

"Besides, since the unusual price spiral in July was concentrated in Metro Manila, it is unlikely that similar national inflation rates will be posted in the coming months," it said.

The BSP's policy-making Monetary Board, for its part, has kept its key interest rates steady during its policy rate setting meeting last week. The neutral stance reflects the BSP's caution despite the benign inflation environment.

The overnight borrowing rate was kept at 6 percent, after a 150-basis point cut in July when the BSP also scrapped its so-called tiering scheme. The overnight lending rate was likewise maintained at 8 percent.

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SUPER SAVERS

ALI ups capital by P1.5B

By Daxim L. Lucas

STOCKHOLDERS OF AYALA Land Inc. yesterday approved a scheme that would allow more overseas investors to buy the company's shares as it approached the statutory foreign ownership limit.

In a special stockholders' meeting, shareholders of ALI approved the creation of P1.5 billion worth of preferred shares, which would expand the company's capital from P20 billion to P21.5 billion.

ALI is one of the largest listed companies on the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) and is widely held by foreign investors and fund managers due to its attractive fundamentals and the high level of liquidity of the stock.

Company officials said the foreign ownership in Ayala Land was now approaching the 40-percent limit imposed by the Constitution. Expanding its capital base through the issuance of preferred shares will allow foreign investors to buy more of the company's common shares, while avoiding a dilution because the new shares will not be traded on the exchange.

ALI chief financial officer Jaime Ysmael said the proceeds of the preferred shares offer would be used "for general corporate purposes and will also partly go to our capital expenditures for the year."

As approved yesterday, the company would issue the preferred shares with a par value of 10 centavos each. The company would give shareholders the right to buy one preferred share for each stock that they hold.

The company's capital expenditure this year is expected to reach P16.2 billion.

Early in the year, the company disclosed a plan to expand development into the residential, shopping mall, office and hotel businesses to take advantage of the property boom.

ALI officials said the company had finalized a P16.2-billion budget for projects in 2007, of which 55 percent, or P8.9 billion, will go to the 27 residential projects to be launched this year.

This is the highest number of residential projects to be launched in the company's history and a 60-percent growth in the number of units offered in 2006, ALI president Jaime Ayala said.

ALI will venture out north of Manila, such as in the provinces of Bulacan and Pampanga.

'07 coco output seen to decline

By Amy R. Remo

THE PHILIPPINE COCONUT AUTHORITY said it was expecting coconut production to drop to 2.1 million metric tons from the target of 2.3 million MT due to the damages inflicted by the typhoons that hit coconut-producing areas in the second semester of 2006.

In 2006, coconut production reached 2.47 million MT in copra terms, down from the previous year's 2.65 million MT.

PCA Administrator Oscar Garin said several programs were being implemented to enable coconut plantations to recover and hit the 3 million-MT production target by 2010 despite the setback caused by the typhoons.

One of these is the P100-million intercropping program implemented in Quezon, Oriental Mindoro, Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes and Sorsogon. This program, alone, is expected to increase coconut productivity by 15 percent.

The strategy is also deemed cost-effective since only P750 worth of intercropping inputs are required per hectare instead of P5,000 per hectare under the previous soil fertilization method.

The other programs include the planting and replanting of some 25,000 hectares of land with coconut hybrids and locally improved varieties; establishing coconut seed garden in 68 provinces, and diversification of monocropped areas.

No new Napocor rate hike, says ERC

By Abigail L. Ho

WHILE NATIONAL POWER CORP. CONTINUES to recover foreign exchange-related costs incurred from November 2005 to January 2006, the Energy Regulatory Commission says there will be no rate hike for the power firm in the coming months.

In a statement issued yesterday, ERC Chair Rodolfo Albano Jr. said the regulatory body's June 12 order merely made permanent a provisional authority granted to Napocor in February to recover additional costs related to the incremental currency exchange rate adjustment (Icera) mechanism.

The Icera is a quarterly adjustment mechanism that allows Napocor to recover forex-related costs. A stronger peso usually means cuts in rates.

The order was not, in any way, an authorization to raise Napocor's rates, Albano said.

He said Napocor had been collecting recoveries related to its sixth Icera application since the Feb. 26-March 25 billing period, immediately following the issuance of a provisional authority for the collection.

All collections connected with the sixth Icera, he said, were part of that particular provisional, and now permanent, authority.

"Once Napocor recovers the total additional costs through the February rate adjustments, such additional charges cease," he explained.

The ERC's June 12 order made permanent Napocor's provisional authority to collect an additional 74.25 centavos per kilowatt-hour (kWh) from Luzon customers, 16.79 centavos per kWh for Visayas clients and 3.04 centavos per kWh for Mindanao customers to recover foreign exchange-related adjustments.

For Luzon, the collection of the additional charge was spread over six months for the debt service and operational expenses part of the adjustments, and 10 months for the forex differential and amortization of fees under build-operate-transfer contracts, according to the ERC order.

In the Visayas grid, the recovery period was pegged at only three months.

Mindanao customers would be paying for the additional charge for a period of eight months for the debt service and opex part and 18 months for the amortization of fees under BOT contracts portion.

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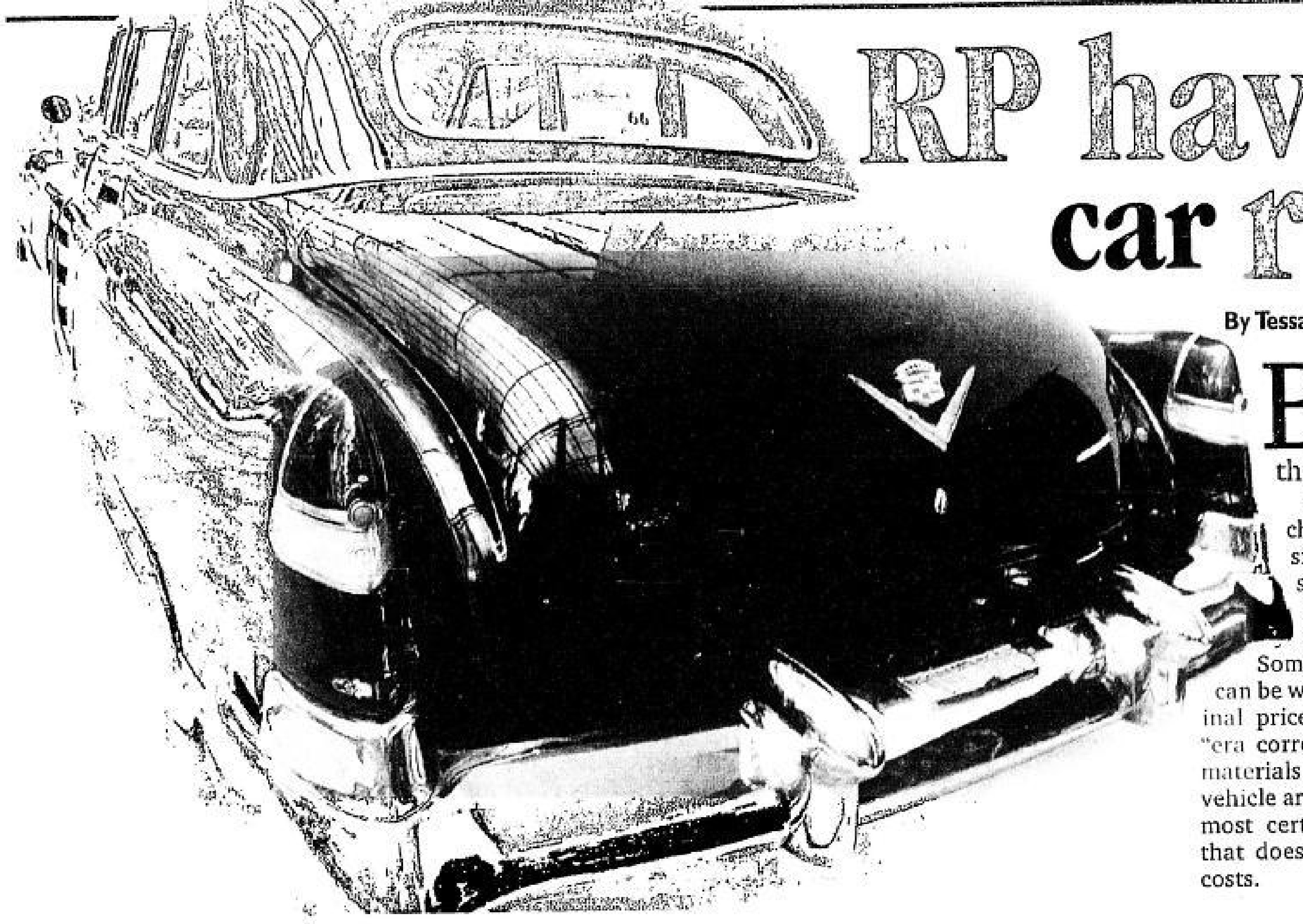


THIS resurrected Cadillac was a runner up in the Transport Motor Show 2007 (vintage category).

RP haven for classic car restoration

By Tessa R. Salazar

BACKHOE ANY SMUGgled modern car all you want, but not these classic beauties.

Restored vintage road machines—a discreet hobby of passionate collectors like Ambassador Danding Cojuangco and Ramon Torres—-have become as precious as art masterpieces. Some of these "rides from the past" can be worth a hundred times their original price tags—inflation included. An "era correct" restored car, meaning the materials and designs used to restore the vehicle are faithful to the original, will almost certainly cost seven figures. And that doesn't yet include the acquisition costs.

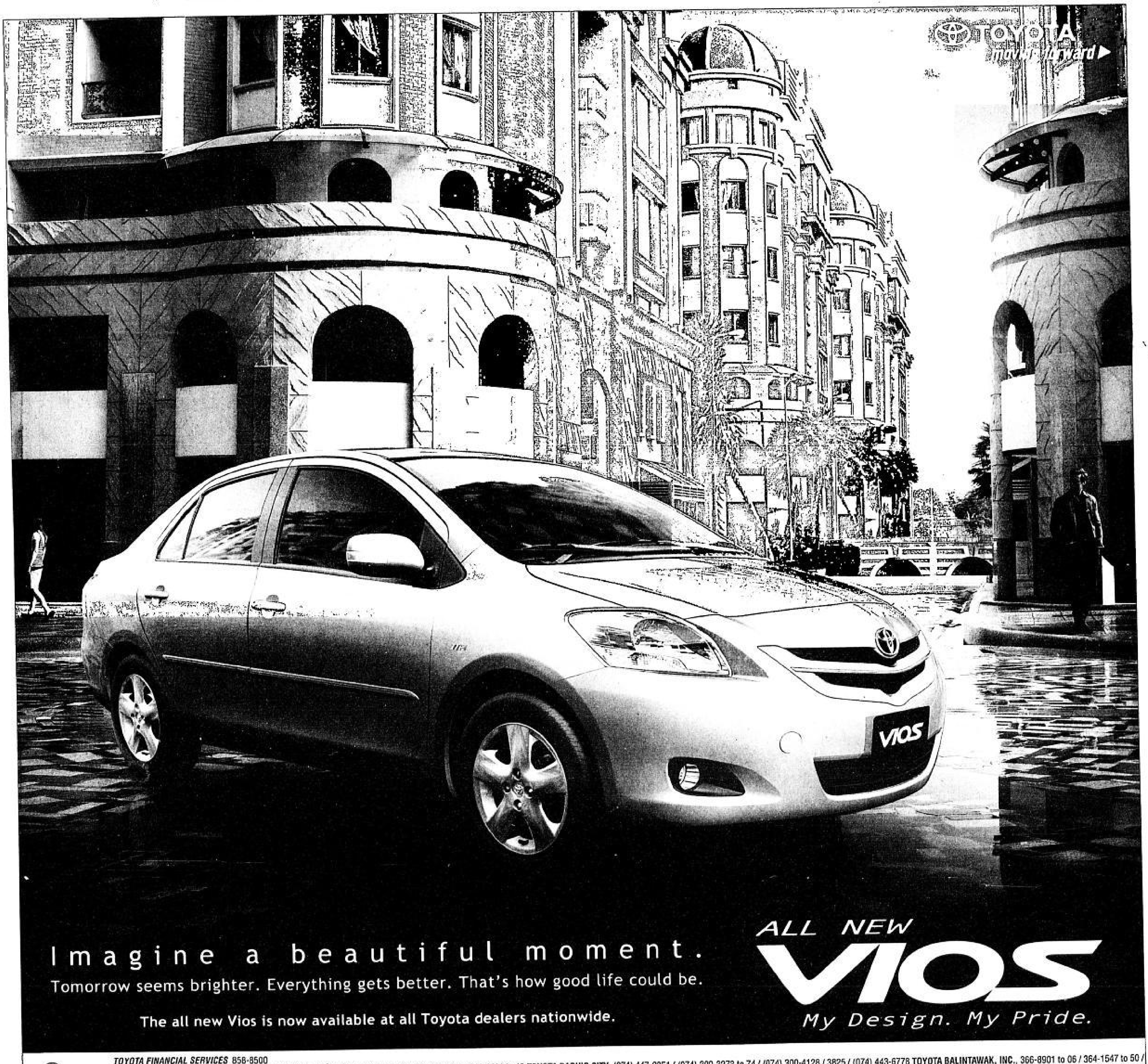
Thriving business

Naturally, the older the car gets, the rarer they can be seen, and the harder they can be restored. In the Philippines, however, car restoration is a thriving business. At least, that's what RP-based and foreign restorers and car enthusiasts have observed. Foreigners find the Philippines a cheaper "shop" to have their cars restored in.

More surprisingly, the local car restoration industry exists without anyone really going into formal training for it. Any car restorer you ask will tell you that there, indeed, is a "demand and supply" chain for this kind of business. It's just that you won't find it listed in our stock exchanges.

The car restoration trade, as the insiders call it, is very real but undefined. So real, in fact, restorers are certain that they could make this into a multibillion dollar industry.

RP HAVEN/ B2-2



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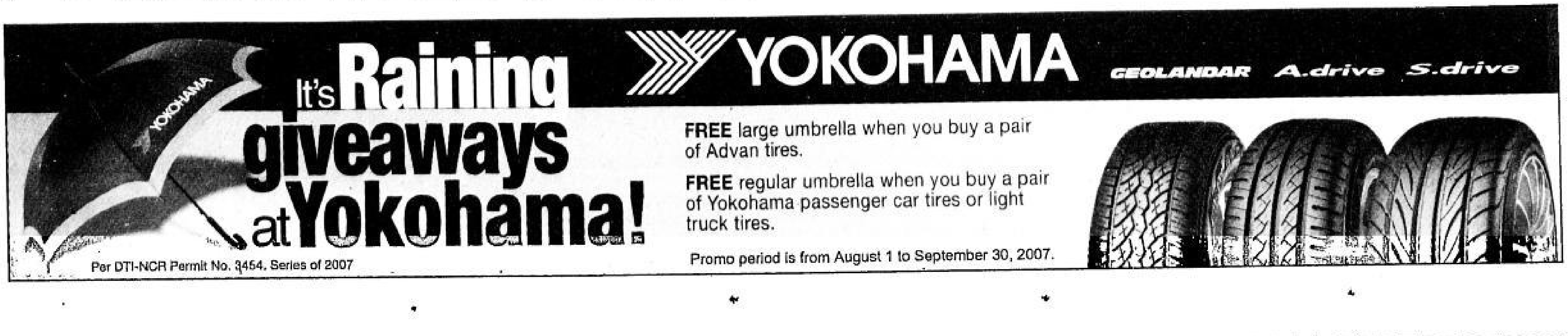

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Insurers urge GSIS to join CTPL solution

By Junep Ocampo
Contributor

THE COUNTRY'S NONLIFE insurers are urging the Government Service Insurance System to join them in their "interim solution" to the problems hounding mandatory insurance for motor vehicles.

The Philippine Insurers and Reinsurers Association (Pira), the umbrella group of all non-life insurance companies in the Philippines, said the GSIS is welcome to participate in the authentication and verification system being used right now at the Land Transportation Office

"GSIS is a member of Pira and we are more than glad to welcome it on board if it wishes to join us in the interim CTPL solution," said Pira president Ramon Dimacali.

GARCIA

DIMACALI

Monopoly

GSIS has been lobbying to monopolize the CTPL business, and GSIS chief Winston Garcia has been quoted in news reports as admitting that it is the "single insurance provider" being referred to by the Department of Transportation and Communications in its Department Order 2007-28.

The order integrates CTPL issuance into the LTO registration process and puts the entire P3-billion-a-year business under one insurance provider.

Opposition

Pira has filed a case questioning the constitutionality of the order.

Dimacali noted that various groups—including the Department of Finance (DoF)—have expressed opposition to a monopoly of the CTPL business.

"Motorists and economists are one in saying that monopoly is bad for everybody and that includes the government," he said.

Interim solution

This is the reason, he stressed, the DoF and the Insurance Commission pushed for the "interim solution" as a stop-gap measure that would ensure the authenticity of all CTPL policies while a permanent system is being developed.

Under the interim solution, only companies with valid license from the Insurance Commission can issue CTPL. During motor vehicle registration, the CTPL will first be checked by an authenticating computer set up by Pira. Those declared authentic will be sent to the verification computer of Stradcom, the computer-system provider of the LTO.

Stradcom's computer will check if the vehicle's records are in order. It will then include the CTPL policy number with the vehicle's records, thus making sure that every vehicle will have its own CTPL insurance.

Sold many times

"In the past, one CTPL insurance policy was usually sold many times to various vehicle owners. This cannot be done now because the computer will reject it," Dimacali said.

The Pira chair added that training is being given to all insurance agents to familiarize them with the interim solution.

"It is a new system. With everybody's help, we're confident that it would work," he said.

Want to know about biofuels? Visit this site

By Junep Ocampo
Contributor

DESPITE THE PASSAGE OF THE PHILIPPINE Biofuels Act, many Filipinos are still clueless about clean-burning fuels.

This is why major players in the emerging biofuels industry have banded together to put up a website that would provide information on everything biofuels in the Philippines.

Biofuels website

The Biofuels Philippines (www.biofuels.com.ph) website was launched recently at the Department of Energy, with representatives from Seaoil Philippines and Chemrez Technologies lending their support. The two pioneered the sale of ethanol-blended gasoline and biodiesel in the Philippines even before the advent of the Biofuels Law.

Seaoil Philippines president Glenn Yu personally toured DoE officials and guests through the website, which has various resources to help motorists and others interested in clean-burning fuels.

Yu expects college students to be the website's No. 1 audience as many of them do research work on environment issues. He explained that the website is far from being complete. "This website is a work in progress and will be continually improved to respond to the needs of its audience," he said.

Seaoil is considered the Philippines' first Biofuels Major. It was the first to sell biofuels in its pumps all over the country and, since August 2005 up to the present, has already logged more than 3 million fill-ups of E10 or gasoline blended with 10 percent ethanol.

Clamor for more info

Chemrez chief operating officer Jun Lao, meanwhile, said the Biofuels Philippines website was put up in response to Filipinos' clamor for more information on biofuels.

"No less than President Macapagal Arroyo has acknowledged that Filipinos still lack information on bifuels, which explains the reason for their hesitation in using biofuels," he said.

Implementation update

Director Mario Marasigan, chief of the Energy Management Bureau of the Department of Energy, gave an update on the implementation of the Biofuels Law which began May 6 this year.

At present, he said, all oil companies are already selling diesel with 1 percent coco diesel blend and some are even doing research on higher percentage blend. He expressed optimism that investments would continue to pour in, particularly in ethanol production.

The Philippines is among the first countries to enact a legislation on mandatory biofuels use. Starting with one percent biodiesel blend for diesel and five percent ethanol blend for gasoline, the Philippine Biofuel Law is expected to cut down the country's dependence on imported oil.

Support

Motorists and car manufacturers also attended the Biofuels Philippines website launch. Jun Espino, a veteran in motorsports, welcomed the website as a very timely initiative that could provide the information motorists need.

"In the past, we had nowhere to go to when we wanted to do research on biofuels. Motorists now are better off because they have the Internet," he said.

For its part, Ford Philippines, the country's biggest maker of cars that can run on high biofuel blends, pledged to support the website and promote it to its customers.

RP haven for classic car restoration

From page B2-1

The talent is already built-in, so to speak. Frank Koh of Route 66 (a private hobby shop known only to Frank's close business associates and friends) says Filipinos are excellent craftsmen, and can interpret every squeak of the car and roar of an engine into a language the world understands—English.

"We are a learned people," Koh quips. "Given the right breaks, the restoration industry in the Philippines can become a major source of income, indeed," he adds.

'Give us a break'

Alex Claudio, also of Route 66, says a multibillion-dollar car restoration industry can only happen if Filipino craftsmen were to be given the proper breaks. "We're just lacking in the proper tools, facilities and breaks. Car restorers in the United States and in Japan get them all."

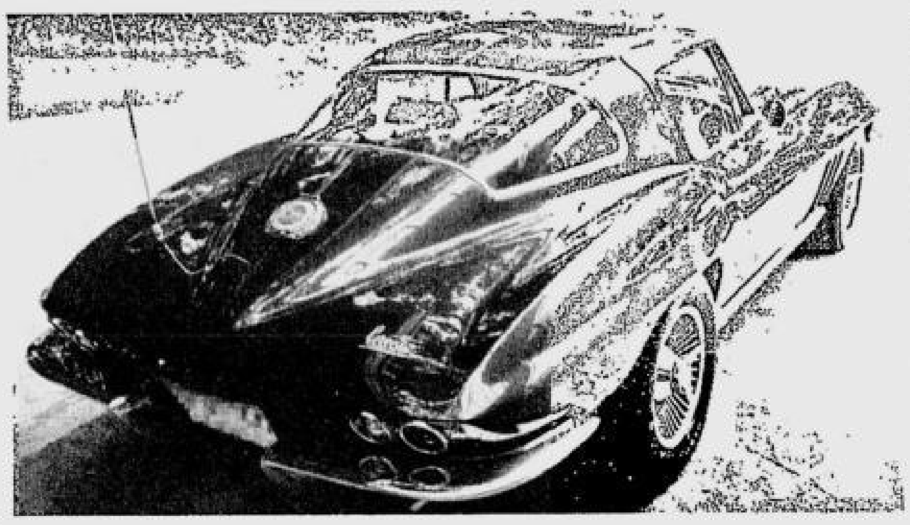
But you can't let pure talent down, as what Koh and Claudio have discovered from years of restoring cars from all ages and eras. Claudio stresses that the country is still being recognized worldwide as a haven for classic cars. "We still literally use old-world craftsmanship. We have people who do great work, from chrome plating to parts reproduction, to fabrication," he says.

"In the Philippines, we are not paid by the hour, we are paid by results. In other words, we take our time."

"Our culture includes keeping things for a long time, *masinop tayo sa gamit*. It's part of the family values, 'this is grandpa's old car, I want to restore it,'" Koh adds.

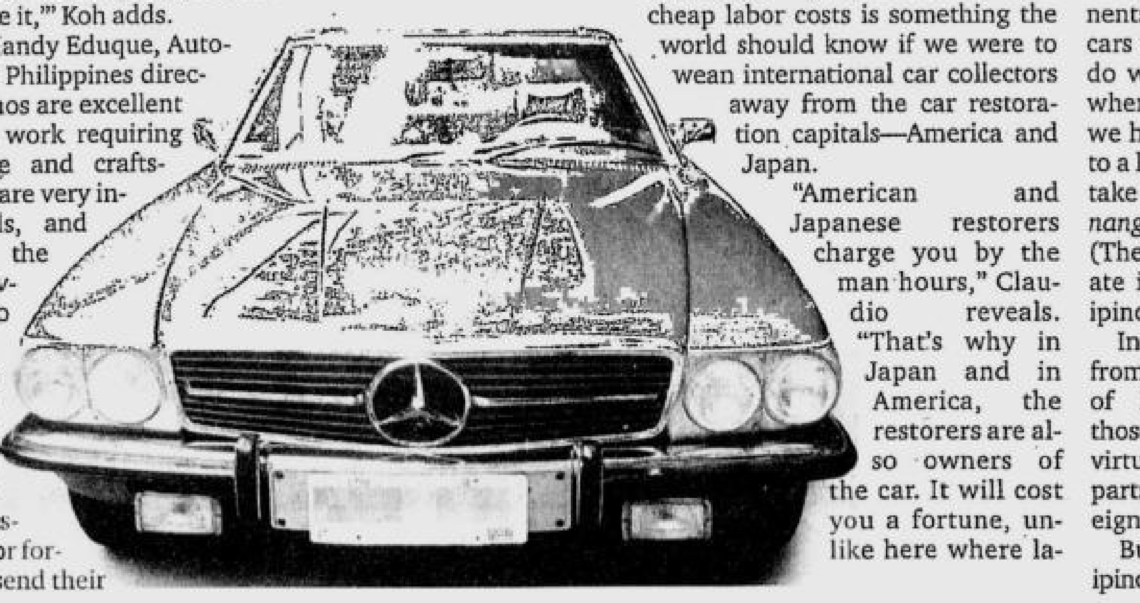
Car enthusiast Mandy Eduque, Automobile Association Philippines director, says that Filipinos are excellent when it comes to work requiring patience, diligence and craftsmanship. Filipinos are very innovative, he adds, and they will solve the problem in whatever way it needs to get solved.

Eduque has some suggestions to get the breaks going this way. "What we need to do is to set up a system of incentives for foreign customers to send their cars here. I think the best way to do it is to encourage people to set up in places in Clark and Subic. You want to minimize red tape and taxes. If you set up in a duty-free zone, you send the cars in. import whatever parts needed duty free. When the cars are finished you ship them back out," he explains.



1966 CHEVROLET Coupé

THIS 1957 "sierra gold" Chevy 7 Bel-Ai[illegible]erald



MERCEDES-BENZ 450 SL sports car in Caubernet color

Low-maintenance perfectionists

"We are perfectionists by heart. In fact, the craftsmen who work with us take pride in their work. Our people go with us to car shows. They treat the cars as if it were their own. That s true dedication, true passion to the hobby. That's a cultural virtue of the Filipino," Claudio says.

Combining perfectionism with cheap labor costs is something the world should know if we were to wean international car collectors away from the car restoration capitals—America and Japan.

"American and Japanese restorers charge you by the man hours," Claudio reveals. "That's why in Japan and in America, the restorers are also owners of the car. It will cost you a fortune, unlike here where labor is cheap."

Regional distinctions

Claudio observes regional distinctions when it comes to craftsmanship. He cites that Visayans were particularly skilled in detailing-polishing and cleaning.

"Kapampangans, and those from Laguna, on the other hand, are skillful with woodworks." He cites, in particular, carvers from Paete, Laguna.

Claudio adds that Filipinos are among the world's best in terms of workmanship and craftsmanship, particularly when working with rare car parts.

"We work with craftsmen who are excellent in metalwork, and there are experts on fiberglass. These are very valuable components when you do restoration work. Some cars we work on have missing parts. What do we do? We copy what is left, such as when the left side is missing, we copy what we have from the right side and convert it to a left mold. That's when foreigners really take notice of the Filipino ingenuity. *Wala nang piyesa, nagagawan pa ng paraan* (There's no existing part, yet we still recreate it). That's what differentiates the Filipino craftsman from the rest."

In Koh's and Claudio's shop, craftsmen from Pampanga have recreated wood trims of Mercedes-Benzes, interiors rivaling those made in Stuttgart, and metalwork of virtually the same finish as their counterparts in Italy—all for just a third of the foreign cost.

But beyond costs, Koh adds that the Filipinos' skills in metallurgy hold up to the test of time, as well. "American and European cars are usually built with thicker gauge metal than Japanese cars, hence the ability of the former to last longer. It is easier to work with sound metal, not accident damaged or distorted due to metal fatigue."

Laid back

Car restoration, Claudio explains, fits the Filipino work culture. "By nature, we have to be laid back. Projects should not be rushed. We always take time. "*Huwag mo akong madaliin, basta tatapusin ko yan* (Don't rush me, I'll finish the job). That suits our way of life."

And it's certainly a way of life computer-designers and simulators cannot still yet fully grasp. "Working with bare hands and eyes on projects that demand a certain eye or a certain skill is certainly an advantage, especially when you have to examine panels and paint work. And when you do metal work, it entails a lot of hammering and feeling."

Restorers agree that the distinctive simplicity of classic cars attract collectors.

"There is a certain visceral effect when you drive vintage or classic cars. If you have an expensive late model car, people look at you with envy. But if you have a very nice collectible classic, people look at you with respect," Koh quips.

And if you happen to be a restorer of these "very nice collectible classics," the respect you gain from an admiring international public may be worth much, much more than the billions of dollars your country is poised to earn from your efforts.

Energy czar tests environment-friendly Prius

ENERGY SECRETARY ANGELO REYES, A staunch advocate of environmental initiatives, recently road-tested the Toyota Prius, a state-of-the-art hybrid vehicle known for its fuel efficiency and environment-friendly features.

Reyes is one of the prominent personalities and authorities tapped by Toyota Motors Philippines Corp. or TMPC to test-drive the Toyota Prius in the Philippines. Toyota brought units of the Prius in the country, so that the vehicles can be tested under local driving and traffic conditions.

Major step

Reyes acknowledged that the use of hybrid vehicles such as the Prius is a major step in the country's efforts to reduce air pollution.

The fuel-efficient Prius has significant benefits to the environment, the most significant of which is reduced air pollution emissions. Tests show that emissions are significantly cleaner for the Prius compared to conventional vehicles.

The Prius is powered by a combination of electric and conventional internal combustion engines. The hybrid car can use either its engine or battery or both to accelerate, depending on driving conditions.

REYES with Toyota Motors PR officer Elijah Marcial.

The Mitsubishi Endeavor

MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

THE CROSS POLLINATION OF CULTURES is commonplace these days, often to the point where we can no longer exactly pinpoint where one influence ends and where one begins.

Take the case of the jeepney, the strongest image in Philippine motoring culture. Filipino in concept and use, the jeepney's building blocks were foreign in origin. All that matters is that the end product is made unique by all the amalgamation and, maybe because of the patchwork, said product works well.

The global nature of large automotive business makes cross cultural influence a common theme. While manufacturers have design philosophies that often reflect their country of origin, the final execution of products is logically tempered to markets where they are to be sold. This is the case of the Mitsubishi Endeavor, a vehicle that carries a Japanese brand but is more American in nature.

Nature, character

As Mitsubishi's first step into producing cars solely for the American market, the Endeavor is made at a manufacturing facility in Illinois that also churns out the current generation Eclipse. That single factor of where this vehicle is physically born speaks volumes on the nature and character of Endeavor.

First thing that gets your attention is that this vehicle smells like it comes from the States; to be exact the Endeavor smells like you are walking down an aisle at Costco. Now smelling like a discount superstore might not be the most appealing of aromas, but in the deepest recesses of the Filipino collective unconscious lurks colonial mentality. Making this car smell like the land of opportunity might just be the automotive marketing coup of the decade. It's sinister, effective and subliminal. I like it.

Of Japanese origin

Looking around the cabin of this mid-sized SUV, you are then reminded of the Japanese origins of this car. Not that there is any hint of the ergonomic efficiency or design parsimony that is signature Japanese manufacturer. The Endeavor interior is the Japanese idea of what Americans will like. And in the way it thumbs a nose at the targeted market, again it earns points.

The plastics are boring; the buttons are chunky and clumsy. The electrical outlet covers are labeled in big bold letters. There are cup holders everywhere along with ample space for burgers and fries. In short, there is nothing clever going on in the Endeavor interior. And for what it says, again, I like it.

Ride quality

Driving the Endeavor around completes the experience of soccer mom Americana. The ride quality is purely all about being soft and cushy. The brakes are overassisted to the point that even a 9-year-old kid could stop this two-ton SUV without breaking a sweat. Steering is light as a feather. Road feel is at a minimum.

Think of a sensory deprivation tank and you've got the Endeavor drive experience down pat. In order to get Americans to drive this car, Mitsubishi must have had to replicate the couch potato experience on the road. In that aspect, the Endeavor is a stunning piece of Japanese engineering.

Potent engine

One place where the US market will not compromise is in the engine category. Here again, Mitsubishi have one upped their target market. There is a potent engine under the hood of the Endeavor. Two hundred thirty horses and 370 Nm of torque are more than you will ever need in this SUV. Cruising at 140 kph is easy and getting there is quickly achieved.

Fuel consumption isn't even as terrible as I expected, with a little less than half a tank left after five days of Manila traffic, and short hops to Cavite and Pampanga. And all this is done with a simple, fuel-injected 3.8-liter, single cam gasoline engine without Mivec variable valve timing. Again, soccer moms don't need Mivec and they probably wouldn't be able to tell if it was there anyway.

The Endeavor is an exercise in adapting. To ensure an acceptable product is placed in one of the world's largest automotive markets, usually clever Mitsubishi has come up with a simpler, less intimidating and friendly entry in the SUV market.

We here in the Philippines find ourselves with a product made for a market that bucks worldwide market trends. Vehicles are getting smarter, greener and generally more sophisticated in execution. If you aren't ready to jump on that train yet don't fret. Mitsubishi doesn't think the United States is either.

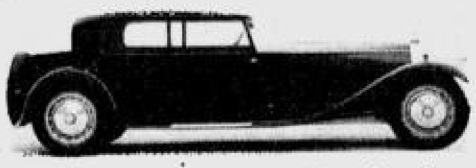
ENDEAVOR

TRANSPORT TRIVIA

By Emman Cena

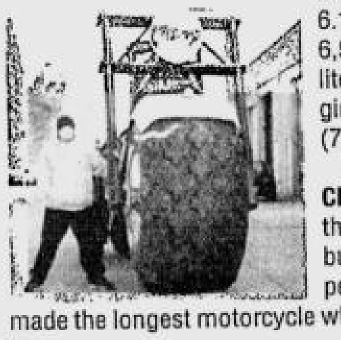
· **MOST EXPENSIVE CAR.** The world's most expensive car, according to Forbes.com, is the Bugatti Type 41 Royale, the brainchild of Ettore Bugatti.

This 1930 Bugatti Type 41 Royale Kellner Coach (or Coupé) was once owned by American multimillionaire Briggs Cunningham, who was himself a sports car constructor and Le Mans 24-Hours racing driver. After more than 30 years, he eventually sold the car to fellow American auto connoisseur Miles Collier who placed the Kellner Coach up for auction in 1987. The car was sold for a record £5.5 million at London's Royal Albert Hall.

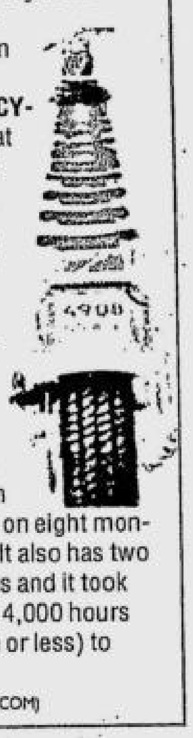


A Japanese car collector is believed to be the present owner of the Coupé. But reports said he has already commissioned Bonham & Brooks in London to offer the Bugatti Royale for resale to anyone willing to pay the asking price.

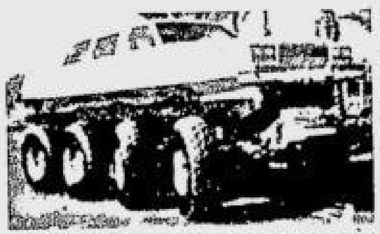
· **TALLEST RIDEABLE MOTORCYCLE.** In 2005, Gregory Dunham of California, United States, constructed a rideable motorcycle that stands at 3.429 m (11 ft 3 in.) tall to the top of handlebars and 6.187 m (20 ft 4 in.) long. It weighs 6,500 lb and is powered by a 8.2-liter (502 cu in.) V8 engine. Its tires are 1.88 m (74 in.) tall.



· **LONGEST MOTORCYCLE.** The same year that the tallest rideable was built, a Russian, in the person of Oleg Rogov, made the longest motorcycle which measures 9.6 m long.



· **HIGHEST/TALLEST LIMOUSINE.** Yes, there's such a thing as highest limousine. The world's highest limousine measures 3.33 m (10 ft 11 in.) from the ground to the car roof. Built by Australians Gary and Shirley Duval on Nov. 13, 1998, it has an eight-wheel independent suspension system and sits on eight monster truck tires. It also has two separate engines and it took the Duvals over 4,000 hours (167 days more or less) to complete.



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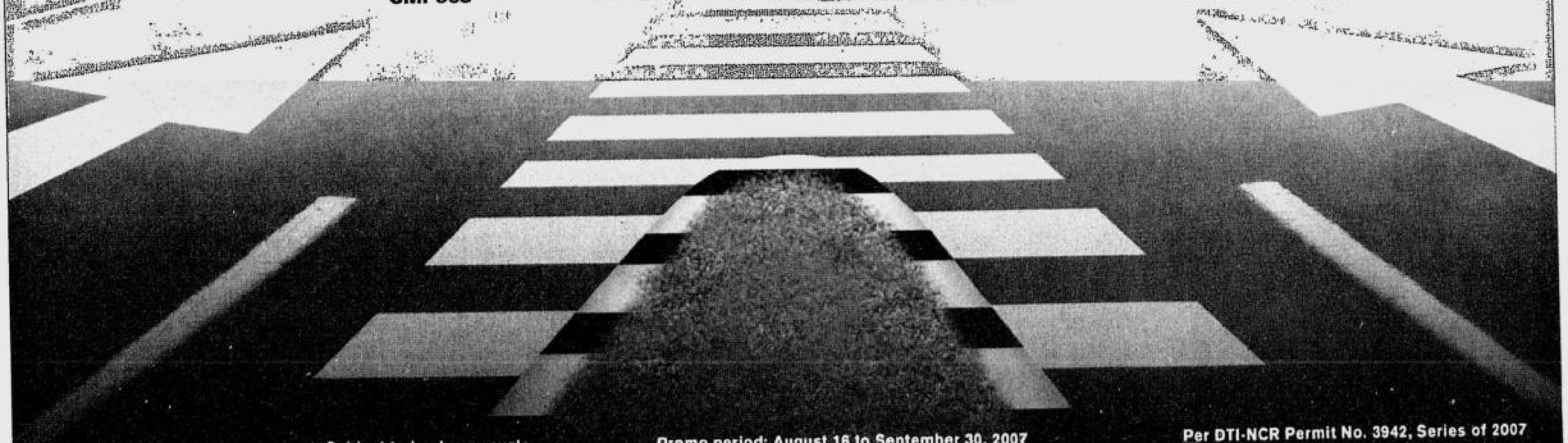

THE 2007 MITSUBISHI Eclipse GT

PHOTOS BY AIDA SEVILLA-MENDOZA

THE ECLIPSE GT's shapely butt

Mitsubishi's coupé d'etat

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

IF YOU DON'T WANT ATTENTION, don't drive the 2007 Mitsubishi Eclipse. Mitsubishi Motors has clearly scored a coup with this drop-dead gorgeous, state-of-the-art 2+2 coupé. Built on the same platform as the Galant sedan and the Endeavor SUV, the fourth generation Eclipse packs the power to match its head-turning looks—although it is not a real sports car, strictly speaking.

In other countries with a bigger market for sporty performance cars, the Eclipse comes in three versions: the 2.4 liter, 4-cylinder GS coupé, the 3.8 liter, V6 GT coupé and a power fabric-topped convertible called the Spyder equipped with either the 4-pot or the V6 engine. Over here, only the V6 GT coupé with the 5-speed Invecs-II Sport Mode automatic transmission is available.

Spectacular

Which was a good decision on the part of Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp., since convertibles are impractical in a hot tropical country like ours and the 4-cylinder engine's 162 horses would not do justice to a car as spectacular as the Eclipse. Too bad, though, that the optional 18-inch tires, which offer more grip, are also not available due reportedly to the generally poor condition of Philippine roads.

Nonetheless, the Eclipse GT's, 3.8-liter SOHC, 24-valve, V6 Mivec engine delivering 263 bhp/5,750 rpm and max torque of 260 lb-ft/4,500 rpm, plus the sports suspension (independent MacPherson struts up front and independent, low-mount link at the back with stabilizer bars fore and aft) can compete, performance-wise, with sports cars that have a similar engine displacement.

Impressive acceleration

The Eclipse GT accelerates impressively—0 to 100 kilometers per hour in 6.5 seconds is the manufacturer's believable claim. However, some torque steer is noticeable in brisk acceleration because all that horsepower is funneled through the front tires. When the GT is pushed hard, especially when cornering, it tends to understeer.

Even then, the steering is pleasingly tight for a front-wheel-drive car and body lean is nicely controlled. The torquey V6 overtakes other cars easily on the highway, where it is in its quiet element and the ride quality is firm but comfortable. On coarse road surfaces, on the other hand, the ride gets choppy and the tires' droning noise intrudes.

Safety features

Disc brakes on all four wheels with ABS and EBD provide good stopping power and brake feel. Two SRS airbags and traction control are the only other standard safety features in the Eclipse sold here, whereas in other markets head and side airbags are also standard equipment.

Inside the Eclipse GT coupé, you'll find black leather seats, logically situated aluminum dials on the curvaceous, retro-like dashboard, aluminum pedals, steering wheel-mounted audio controls, automatic climate control and a 650-watt Rockford Fosgate AM/FM radio with in-dash 6-disc CD/MP3 changer and nine speakers (including a subwoofer in the trunk, where it takes up some of the cargo space).

No exception

2+2 coupes are not famous for passenger cabin spaciousness and the Eclipse is no exception. While leg room is good in front and the well-bolstered seats are comfortable and provide support in fast turns, the rear seat is difficult to access and legroom is cramped, making it useful only for toddlers or small cargo items.

Even the front seats are a bit hard to enter or exit because of the low-slung architecture of the Eclipse and its long doors. Visibility looking out is poor, especially rearward over the shoulder due to the thick roof pillars and the swooping rake of the rear windshield. The Eclipse's large turning circle increases the hassle of parking in tight spots. A rear parking sensor would definitely help, even as an option.

But these inconveniences are a trade-off for the awesome stylishness of the 2007 Eclipse. Mitsubishi's robust coupé may not have the agility of competitors that weigh less and/or have the benefit of rear-wheel or all-wheel-drive, but it sure looks great and can run as fast as the best of them. Moreover, with a P2.5 million price tag, which is at least P1.0 million less than sports cars in the market, the Eclipse puts sporty driving pleasure within the reach of more people.

* * *

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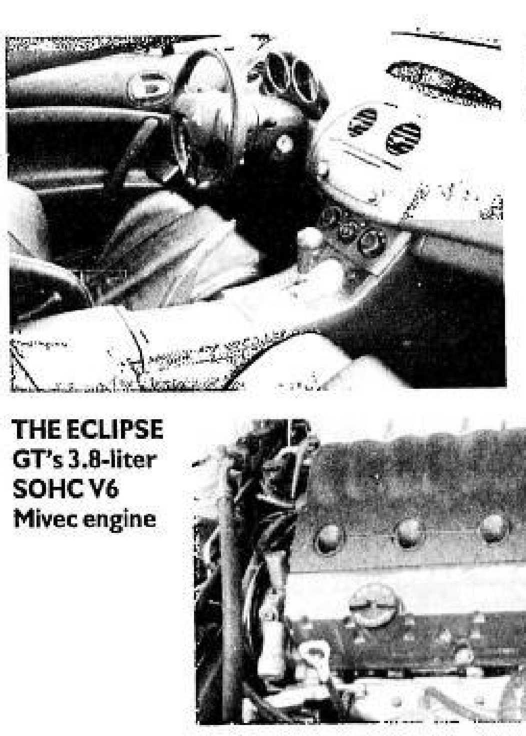

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THE ECLIPSE GT's 3.8-liter SOHC V6 Mivec engine

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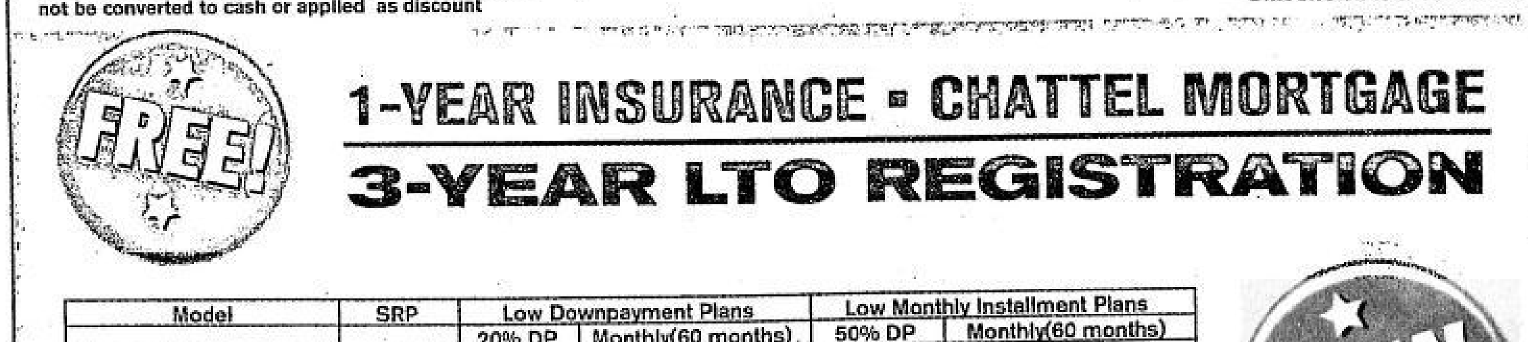

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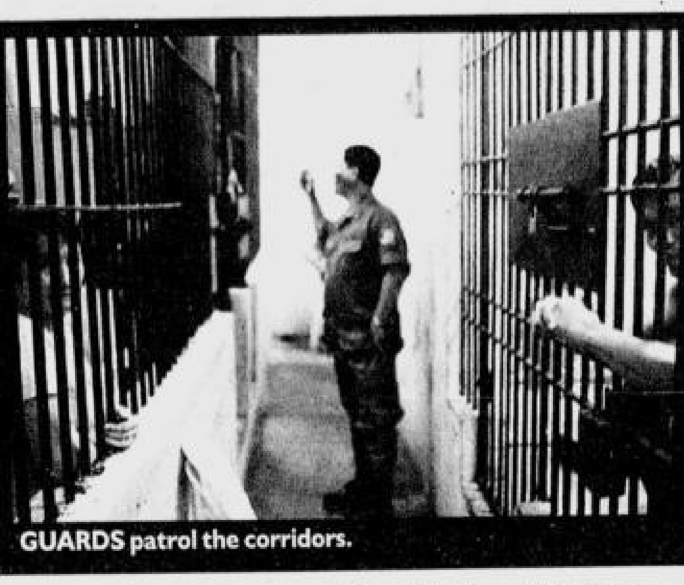
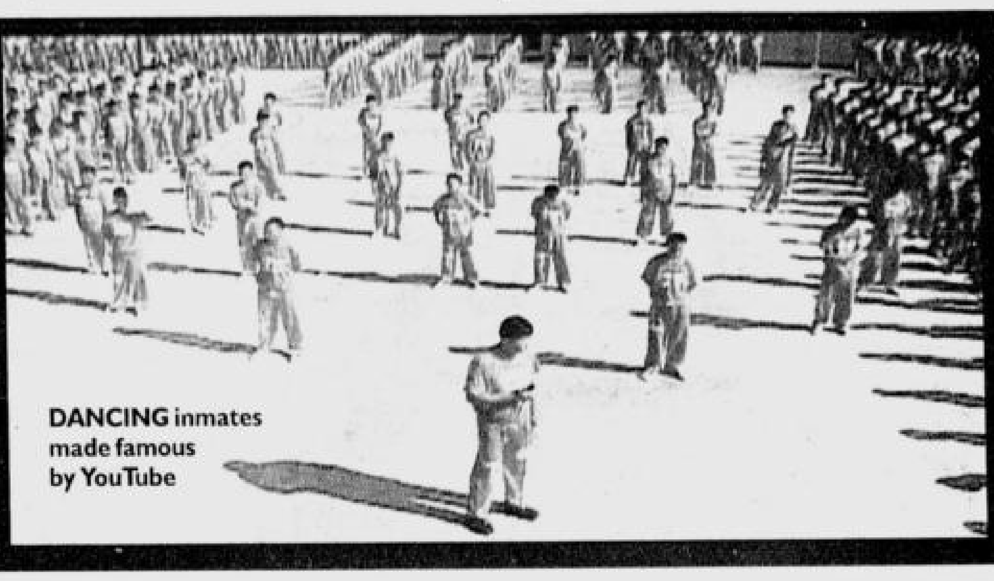
Prison break


GUARDS patrol the corridors.


DANCING inmates made famous by YouTube

By Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent

"THE SITUATION WE have in our jails is sad," said Pepe Diokno, one of five filmmakers who made a series of short films about Philippine jails for a project spearheaded by RockEd Philippines.

"Most inmates in our jails haven't been convicted. They wait months between hearings and have to deal with overloaded public attorneys, absentee judges and corrupt policemen. The situation deserves to be looked at more."

Four people volunteered to do the short films: RockEd founder and Media Education lecturer Gang Badoy, poet and Radioactive Sago Project frontman Lourd de Veyra, actor-comedian Tado Jimenez, TV executive Marjorie Lachica, and film student and writer Pepe Diokno. Kidlat de Guia did the camera work and cinematography.

The films, which focus on the various conditions of Philippine jails, range from humorous (Diokno's take on the dancing inmates of Cebu and Jimenez's commentary on jails) to downright depressing (De Veyra's and Lachica's peek at congested prisons and Badoy's probe of the justice system).

The short films are the results of a year's research regarding Philippine prisons. The films were funded through a grant awarded by the Asia Foundation to Libertas, a project proponent group. In turn, Libertas tapped RockEd's volunteer artists to make the documentaries.

"I asked colleagues if they wanted to split the budget into four and make short films on several aspects of this problem," said Badoy. "Given the topic—Philippine jails and our justice system—we imagined that showing four points of view was better than a long, drawn-out one. Four storytelling styles to cover the many facets of our jails."

The RockEd volunteers took on the stories with little or no background in filmmaking. Armed with nothing but digital camcorders, some research and a bit of humor (Jimenez was reportedly the crowd favorite in the prisons, with the inmates chanting "Ta-do! Ta-do! Ta-do!" every time he entered), the group traveled around the country to visit various prisons.

Raw and bare

Badoy said, "I thought if non-pro filmmakers gave it a shot, the stories would come out raw and bare. And sometimes that is what the public needs to see: A raw and brass tacks view."

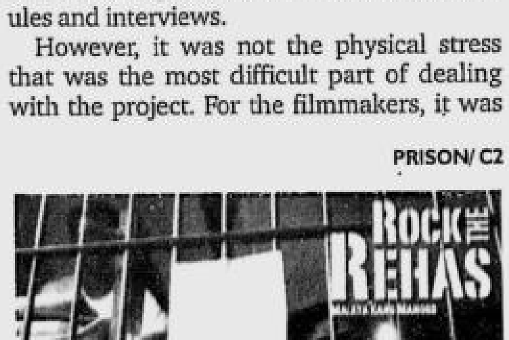
She continued, "It was a challenge to magnify the stories of the inmates in jail, mostly the ones who cannot afford to buy justice. So without really knowing what we were getting into, we accepted the project on word of honor. No signed contracts, no memos of agreement; just our integrity and our ideas."

Diokno said, "The other [filmmakers] and I toured jails from North Luzon to Davao. We spent weeks visiting jails, with a different jail everyday. We'd talk to the inmates, learn their stories."

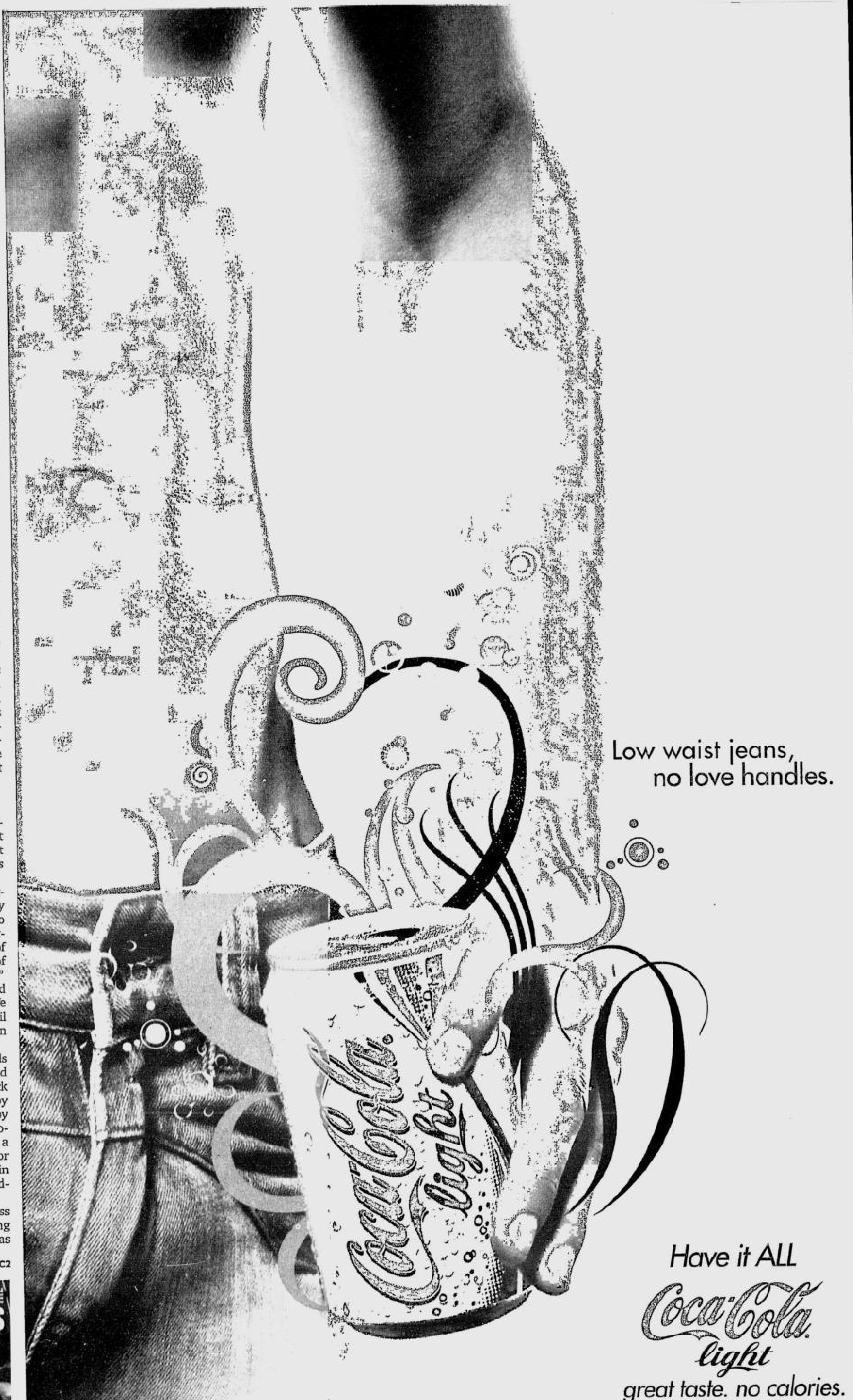
The months of visiting dark, crowded jails and listening to the inmates' stories resulted in four short films: "DokumenTADO: Rock the Rehas" by Jimenez, "Buhay Looban" by De Veyra and Lachica, "1048:2261" by Badoy, and "Dancing for Discipline" by Diokno. Since the filmmakers did the work on a volunteer basis, it was quite a struggle for them as they juggled their day jobs (or, in Diokno's case, classes) with shooting schedules and interviews.

However, it was not the physical stress that was the most difficult part of dealing with the project. For the filmmakers, it was

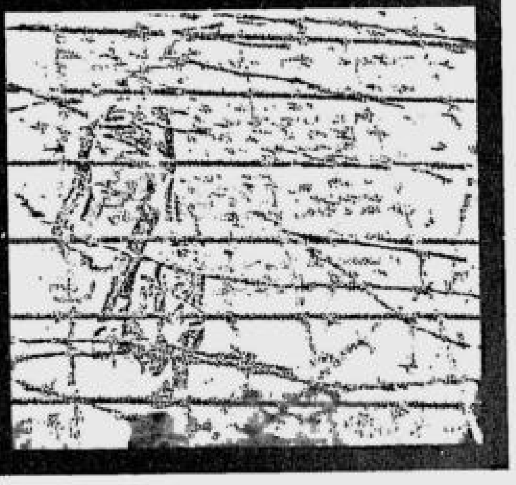
PRISON/ C2



ROCKED'S latest project



SCENES from the four films



Prison break

From page C1

realizing that many inmates languished in sub-human conditions for crimes that they may or may not have committed.

"The project was pretty taxing emotionally," shared Diokno. "[It was difficult] knowing that there is so much that can be done to improve our penal and judicial system and our police force, but feeling powerless to do anything."

De Veyra, on the other hand, said that the toughest part of doing the documentaries was constantly considering the objectives of the documentary as he explored creative possibilities.

"In poetry, I'm free to mind-map and explore a topic," he said. "On this one, there was a creative limit somewhere because the documentary, after all, needed to tackle a topic. Lines were thickly drawn and the challenge was to stay within those limits without compromising the literary and visual value of the story."

Making the films inspired Badoy and company to do a collection drive in order to improve the living conditions of the prisoners. Dubbed "Rock the Rehas," the project gets volunteers to collect toiletries, old clothes, blankets, pillowcases, and entertainment materials such as chess sets, hobby kits, musical instruments and board games for the inmates.

Visiting jails and going through red tape to make the films resulted in quite a lot of stress for the filmmakers, but all of them insisted that the experience was worth it.

"The four of us silently agreed that these stories had to be told," Badoy said. "And because we had the chance to do it, we agreed to do it well despite the odds."

E-mail the author at biancaconsunji@yahoo.com

A talk with the filmmakers

Pepe Diokno, 'Dancing for Discipline'

What is your documentary about?

My docu's about the dancing inmates at the Cebu Provincial Detention and Rehabilitation Center (whew, that's the longest name I've ever had to write on a subtitle).

You've probably seen them dancing the "Thriller" on YouTube. Spent a couple of days with them, and found that the guy who heads the jails (his name is Byron Garcia, his official title is "security consultant") is a pretty fun character—and by fun, I mean funny. My documentary is a look into our concepts of discipline, in the context of what's happening at that jail.

What prompted you to make your film, and what sets it apart from other existing films on the same topic?

I saw the inmates dancing on YouTube and I was intrigued. My documentary isn't gritty or heavy like many documentaries on jails are. It's pretty light. I shot the film, edited, scored it; and often, when you work on films, you see it over and over, and by the time you're done you feel nothing for the film; but I just saw it again for the 1,000th time, and I laughed my ass off. So, I think people will like it.

What were the difficulties that you encountered while doing the film?

Shooting it was pretty easy, but I had to fly back and forth between Cebu and Manila to make it to my classes. Byron Garcia, the province's security consultant who pretty much heads the jail, was very accommodating.

Before I shot the film, though, the other [filmmakers] and I toured jails from North Luzon to Davao. We spent weeks visiting jails with a different jail everyday. We'd talk to the inmates, learn their stories. That was pretty taxing emotionally, knowing that there is so much that can be done to improve our penal system, our police force, our judicial system, and feeling powerless to do anything.

The situation we have in our jails is sad. Most inmates in our jails haven't been convicted—they wait months between hearings, and have to deal with overloaded public attorneys, absentee judges, corrupt policemen. The situation deserves to be looked into more. I think that this is one of the most basic problems we have in our country. If we could fix our judicial system, man, that would solve so many other problems!

What do you hope to achieve by releasing the docu/film?

With my film, I want people to examine their concept of discipline. We need to, especially nowadays, when there is so much pressure from governments to conform with their views and ideologies.

By watching all four films, I'd like people to take a second look at our jails. I think we'd all like people to get involved. There are many, many ways to help; and if any of you reading are interested, you can contact RockEd Philippines. Go to rockedradio.com

What are your next projects in line, if any?

Again, our jails deserve a second look. There is a wealth of stories there. I'd definitely go back to a jail to shoot something.

What does your film say, in a nutshell?

It says, "Watch me! Watch me!"

GANG Badoy

PEPE Diokno

Gang Badoy, '1048:2261'

Why did you choose to make your film?

The truth is, I didn't choose to make this documentary from the get-go. In fact, this was the reason why I decided to make it into a creative team effort. I knew I couldn't do it on my own, especially with the emotional storm I foresaw I would go through and did. *Bata nga lang sa kalye, nanghihina na ako eh, preso pa kaya? May kasama pang takot 'yun dahil sa mga kuwento tungkol sa mga kriminal.*

So, I asked colleagues whom I trust and admire if they wanted to split the budget into four and make short films on our own on several aspects of this problem.

I thought if non-pro filmmakers gave it a shot, the stories will come out raw and bare. And sometimes that is what the public needs to see. A raw and brass tacks view.

The award-winning Ditsi Carolino film "Bunso" was an inspiration for the funders to produce this collection of works. Ditsi Carolino's opus is rightly acclaimed for the courage and endurance and decisiveness of her stance. Will we win an award? (The group was asked one time). Irrelevant, we all decided. Even the most calloused of people will agree that critical recognition is irrelevant in the face of this task. The inmates' stories have to be heard. End of story.

What were the difficulties that you encountered while doing the film?

The difficulties were all well worth it. Let me at least start with that disclaimer. It was tough because given the one-year duration of the film project, we were only able to start shooting four months after the funder's clock started ticking. The League of Cities of the Philippines supported us with some permits to shoot in several cities but, as usual, the paperwork was hardly in-step with our pace.

During the actual shooting days, what I found most difficult was when the inmates would stop talking when jail guards would walk within our earshot. It was difficult to get them to talk again, and to ignore the frisson of fear and potential harm they'll go through in case the jail guards think that they were badmouthed. Typical power structure. Even in the free world.

Working on the budget constraint, we all had to share cameras and lapel mics, and therefore we had to share footage. It's a good thing we were all friends so it was okay to talk to each other in the end when it came to division of tapes.

We had to divide our time between creative work, emotional stress, plus the mechanical organization of administrative work. That was a tough balance to ask of volunteer filmmakers, I think. For anyone, actually.

Many of the mayors and governors denied our request to shoot inside the jails because of security reasons and some, being more honest than others, admitted that they were embarrassed about the conditions of their jails. Which made me press them more for permission because I kept insisting that those situations have to be known in public so even the private citizen can help.

Since majority of them were ego-driven, they disallowed us because they thought a crowded, dingy jail cell was a reflection of their office. Perhaps it was, perhaps it wasn't. All I know is that many factors contribute to that condition. Multi-faceted *ang problema, pero unang-una, dapat maikuwento at malaman ng madla.*

Filming in jails was tough emotionally because of the dismal conditions we had to witness. The thought of going to sleep in a decent bed that night while many of them are unjustly detained in sub-human quarters drowned me in unnecessary (or perhaps necessary?) guilt.

It was good though because we all began to appreciate even the cheap pension houses we were billeted in because of the day's comparison.

How has the response to your film been so far? What do you hope to achieve by releasing the docu/film?

So far, a lot of universities have asked about screening the film on their campuses. Many have e-mailed us and left messages on our online accounts about wanting to see it. That fascination comes from the fact that none of us is a professional filmmaker.

A few law schools have expressed their interest in screening it soon. I think they want to also see what we've seen. They want to see what Tado saw, what Lourd heard, imagine what I smelled, who Marjorie talked to, and who Pepe shot. Especially since many of them rarely get the chance to visit a prison or a jail in real life. All they have are the movies or "Oz" and "Prison Break" on TV—which we all know is a universe of difference from our jails.

I specifically created my film for students in law school. I focused on the Public Attorney's Office and the implications of having no adequate support for it. I also believe that we have too many lawyers who do not defend truth or justice. I always saw lawyering as a noble profession which, of course, many lawyers today spectacularly disprove.

I thought if I could show the magnitude of the positive effects lawyers can create, if they did their duties in pursuit of justice instead of their egos, percentage cuts, or luxury cars, then perhaps more Filipinos would have better lives.

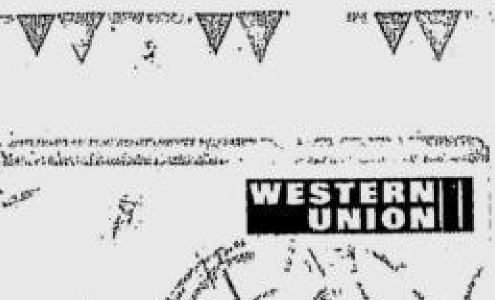
If a number of rich lawyers devoted some percentage of their time helping indigent detainees, especially those who have been wrongly accused or misinformed about their rights, then maybe more families would be able to keep their breadwinners at home. A distant dream, I know. But we are entitled to dream, right? But wait—that goes for everyone who can afford to help, not just lawyers.

What do I hope to achieve? Since the documentary is done, I am satisfied that, at least, stories are now recorded somewhere. This translates to a possibility of more young Filipinos being made aware of our system: And I now have an audio-visual demonstration of how our justice system tilts in favor of the rich.

Many of us know this already but I wanted to illustrate it and make it crystal. *Wala ka nang duda, totoo ito—kung wala kang pera, lagot ka talaga. Gusto ko makita ito ng mas marami pang kabataan, para mas maintindihan nila ang mga kailangan pang gawin.*

What are your next projects in line, if any?

Well, this series actually gave birth to a major Rock Ed project called "Rock the Rehas." It's a three-pronged project that involves volunteers being trained to help assist



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IAN Tado Jimenez at the city hall

looking in

public attorneys follow up on cases of indigent detainees: The volunteers act as a "*kamag-anak*" of a detainee and keeps track of their case movement. Many of the detainees have no means or no relatives helping them out, they are kept in the dark, their cases are delayed, rescheduled, or just lost in the piles on the hallways of the city hall. Chief Justice Reynato Puno assured me that he would support this project, and so did our Chief Public Attorney, Persida Rueda-Acosta. So that's one.

The other one is a series of "Rehas" gigs that collect for toiletries, old clothes, board games, musical instruments, beddings, books and magazines for inmates. We also collect sanitary napkins for women detainees.

Rock Ed also goes to jails to teach alternative classes for the women and children who visit (pilot site is the Maximum Security Bilibid in Muntinlupa). Rock Ed volunteer Soliman Cruz (the actor) also offered a theater workshop for inmates. Adarna Books has provided storytelling sessions, while I teach basic creative writing for the people in the former death row.

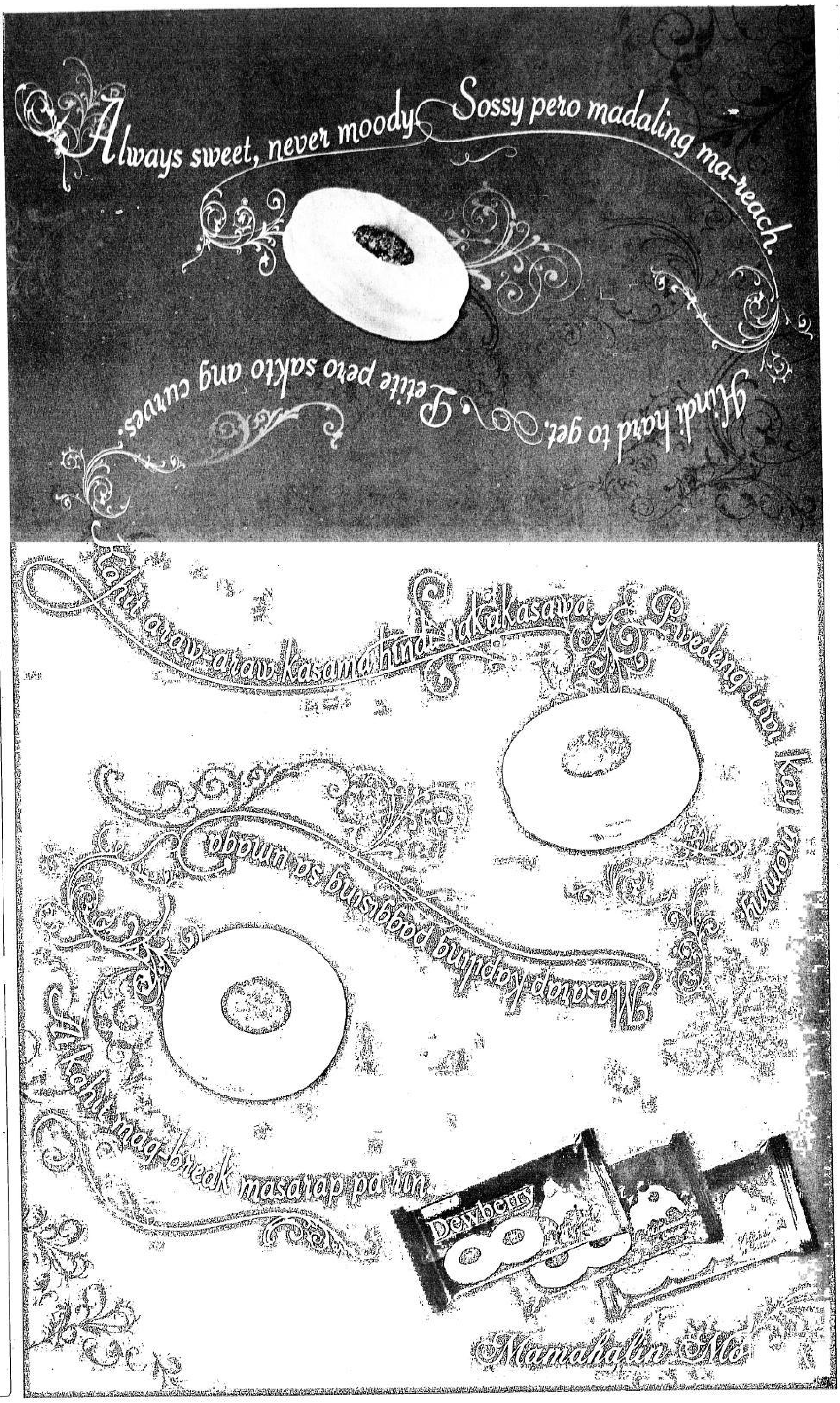
A lot of good spin-offs came about from our experience in jails. We also made the Maximum Security a regular venue for concerts, Rock Ed volunteer bands come with us periodically to stage concerts for the inmates, just so they have something new to talk about.

In prison, stories are all they have. When new people visit, at least they have a fresh set of ears to listen to their stories. And they hear new music, and watch new performers. Then they have something new to talk about till the next month. And, often times, as one of them confided in me, when they have new stories to tell each other—they almost feel free.

Lourd says, as far as he's concerned, he will not create another funded documentary again. Me? If I can independently produce one, I just might do a follow up on this one.

What does your film say, in a nutshell?

The title of my documentary is "1048:2261," that is the ratio of public attorneys to courts in the Philippines. I made sure what I wanted to say was already in my title, just in case none of you get to see it.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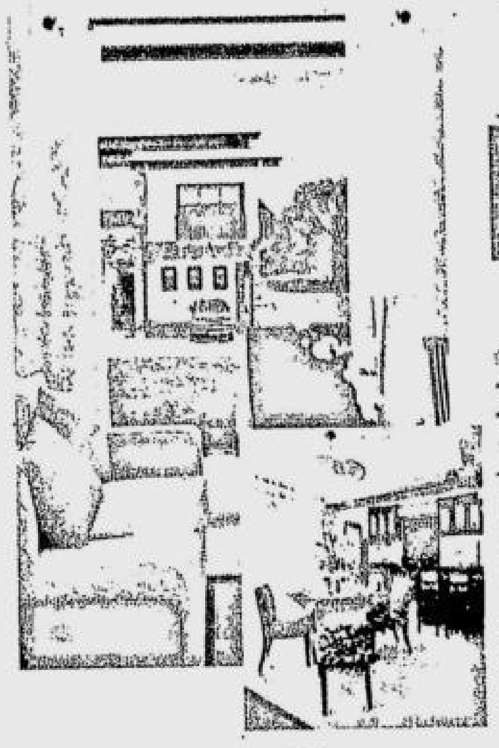

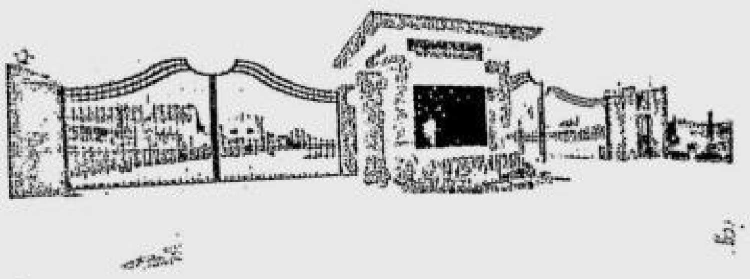

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Back to the future

THE ONLY WAY TO BE fashion-forward this season is to go back to the past. Local retail brand Penshoppe shows how by marrying retro with an unlikely partner: Punk.

In its latest collection of casual wear for men and women, Penshoppe offers a funky, wearable collection that evokes retro without looking like you're on your way to a costume party, plus hints of punk minus the ear piercings and mohawk 'do.

The silhouettes and cuts are classic and streamlined, but infused with edgy artwork, graphics, details and styling.

For men, classic styles such as cardigans, crew-neck tees, blazers and long-sleeved polos get punked up with cool outsized graphic prints and Brit-punk jeans.

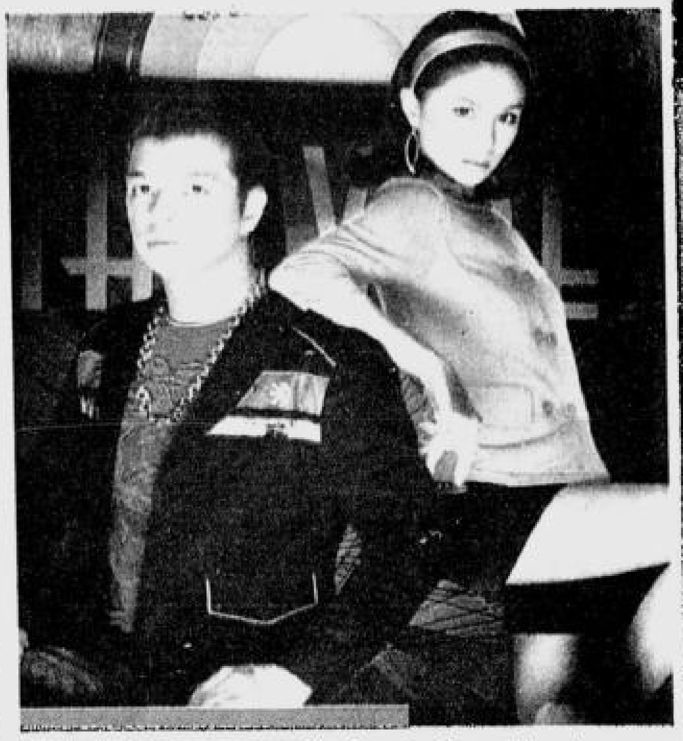
Colors come in cool and urban street-smart neutrals such as black, navy and gray with just the right notes of flamboyant retro peeking through in accents of bright yellow, orange, red and green.

Vintage romance with an attitude defines the girls' collection. For tops, figure-friendly silhouettes with interesting sleeve details take their place alongside flattering kimono tops rendered in cascading prints inspired by vintage florals. The look is still girly, but with a definite edge to it.

Giving streamlined, classic appeal to these hip ensembles are Penshoppe's skinny jeans, shorts and tailored pants.

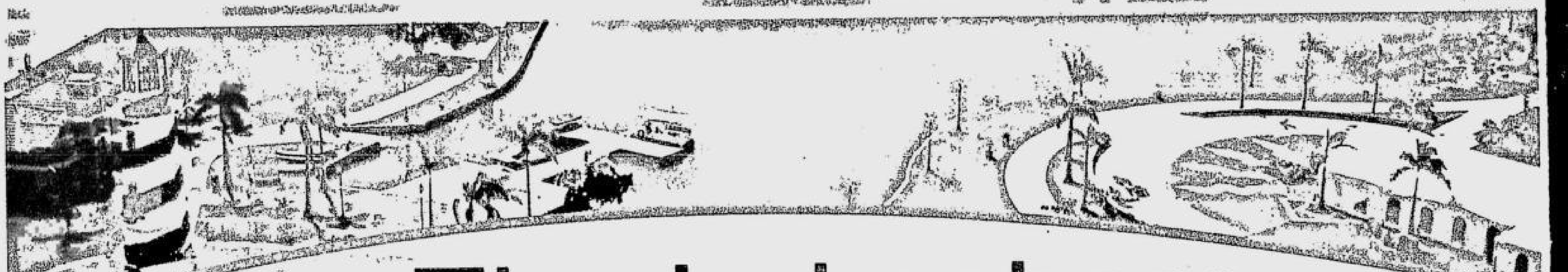
The retro-punk statement is also very strong in Penshoppe's newest music-inspired tees co-branded with MYX, the Philippines' top music channel.

These collections are available at Penshoppe boutiques nationwide.



PENSHOPPE'S newest collection. On Heart: French terry peasant coat paired shorts with white cuff detail. On Echo: Blazer with taping details worn over semi-fitted tee

CLUB Pen member Dawn Balagot wears a wide-sleeve blouson top paired with brown shorts with stitching detail.



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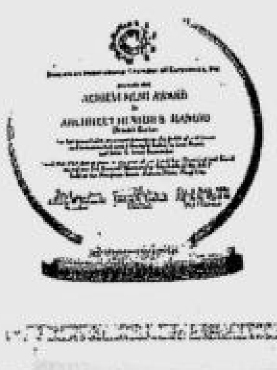

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LIFESTYLE

How I survived cancer

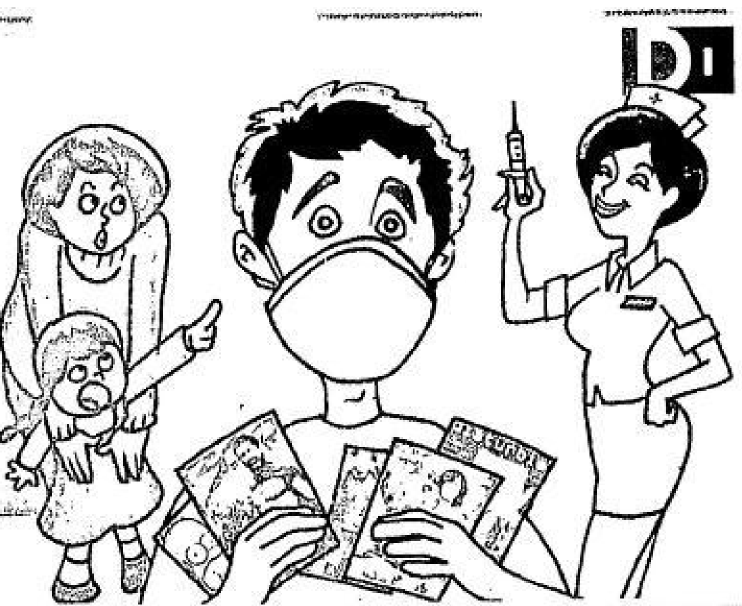
ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

By Ryan Fernandez
2bU! Contributor

"M*AGPAGUPIT KA na kaya?*" said my dad, eyeing the thick sideburns outlining my face. I ran my fingers through my hair, tugging on patches of black here and there. It reminded me of my dog's fur—coarse, wavy and densely black. As my barber would say, "Sir, *wala nang hugis*."

WHAT IT'S LIKE

Any other time and I would have rushed to the barber for a trimming. These days, though, I don't take my dad's remark as harsh criticism. On the contrary, I see it as a compliment. I could've been bald today.

By the time you read this article, it will have been a week since I finished my chemotherapy. Six full cycles of treatment. Six months of drowning in uncertainty—and struggling to rise and break through the water's surface. Although my chemo may be over, I don't want to risk jinxing myself; there may be a few more unexpected trials along the way.

After all, it was supposed to be just a vacation. I arrived from New York last February, fleeing both the overwhelming demands of my two jobs (I worked in a restaurant and in an art gallery), and the bitter cold of winter. Mentally, I had narrowly escaped a nervous breakdown. Physically, I was a wreck: Pale, underweight, sleep-deprived and coughing up blood. But if anything I had promised myself three and a half weeks of tropical bliss, combing white-sand beaches and trying out exotic diving spots. The last thing I wanted was to check into a hospital.

Mysterious lump

It was on my second week that I started having trouble breathing. I unbuttoned my collar and found a small lump above my left collarbone. A white mass in my lungs showed up on the X-ray the following day. One week later, I wasn't frolicking in some pristine beach, but being sedated for a biopsy. The word "cancer" started popping up somewhere along the way, and depending on who said it, the word seemed to take on various meanings. There were doctors who pronounced it with clinical efficiency; and priests and nuns who preferred to call it a blessing in disguise. My parents and our relatives were content to refer to it as the Big C (which makes me wonder what the little c is).

As it turned out it wasn't exactly a C, but an L. Lymphoma—a common type of cancer that happens to young adults with a 90-percent cure rate. Shocking as the news was, I had long decided that if it were cancer, I would never let it bring me down. After all, if I were to live through it, it would make for one hell of a story. There was so much I hadn't done in this world—places to visit, people to meet—no way could I just give up without a fight. I saw it as a personal challenge; an affront to my pride that a sneaky little creep such as cancer could catch me off guard. So armed with ceaseless prayers and a pile of DVDs to keep me laughing, I decided to take back my life.

Cancer misconceptions

I soon discovered that I had to deal with cancer and its misconceptions not just in the hospital, or in the privacy of home, but outside as well: At parties, dinner tables, beach resorts and in all kinds of scenarios. There were awkward moments, all right. A friend would introduce me to someone, and five minutes into the conversation, he would just blurt out I had cancer. The acquaintance would be mortified, and our friendly exchange would spiral down into a series of unnecessary apologies on their part. Then there were the times I had to decline generous portions of beef, pork and sweets—which actually shocked some people, more perhaps because these kinds of food are so integral to Pinoy cuisine.

But the most colorful reactions I received from people were toward my masks. Requested by my doctor, medical masks were a way of filtering out diseases which would hamper my treatment. At first, I had to wear one whenever I stepped out of the house, which helped me keep free of germs, but unfortunately, also drew a lot of attention. Children gawked and giggled, while their parents hushed them before nervously looking the other way. I'd look into a mirror and only see a shifty-eyed stranger; a mad doctor look-alike out to kidnap youngsters for unspeakable experiments.

Cute nurses

No doubt about it, there were also a few precious benefits: The opportunity to slow down and appreciate life one day at a time; the company of true friends; even the simple joy of being fawned over by cute nurses. Sure, chemo took a large chunk of my time, but the truth was that I had learned to stop worrying too much, and became more concerned with eating right and living healthy.

I've met many "classmates" in cancer along the way: Some have dropped out, some have graduated, and some are right in the thick of things, fighting for every single day they're still alive. What it boils down to is this: everyone has the same 24 hours a day, but it's what you do with that time that counts.

If you met me now, you wouldn't know I'm a survivor; you wouldn't be able to tell that while you went out on weekends, I had spent mine strapped to a machine, being fed chemical drugs with names I couldn't even begin to pronounce. And though I had completely shaved my head several times during the course of treatment, the hair seemed to only grow back thicker every time—a ceaseless source of amusement, perplexity and wonder for loved ones.

E-mail the author at ry.fern@gmail.com.

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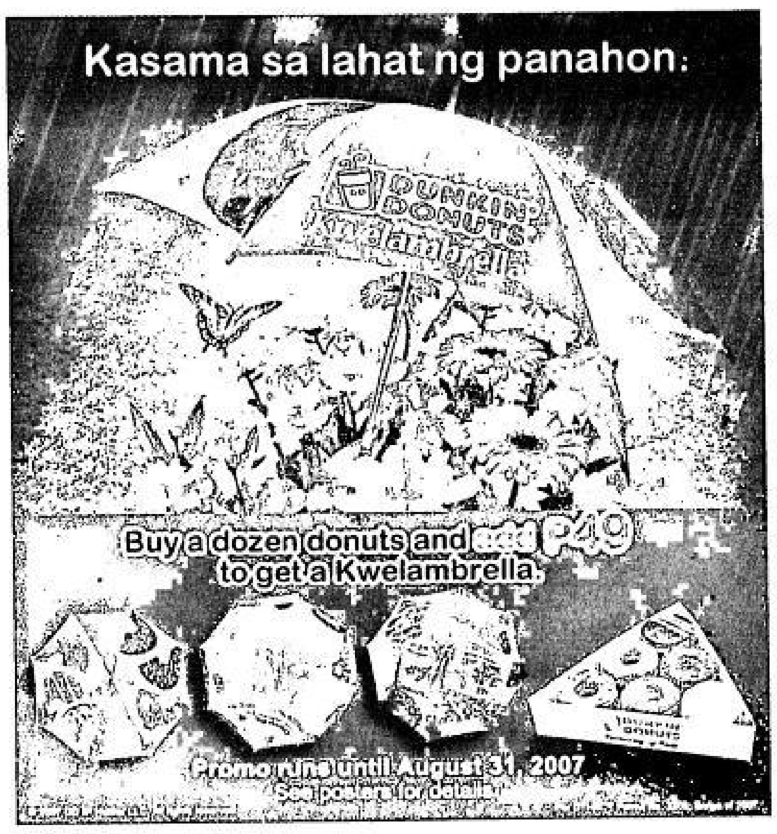
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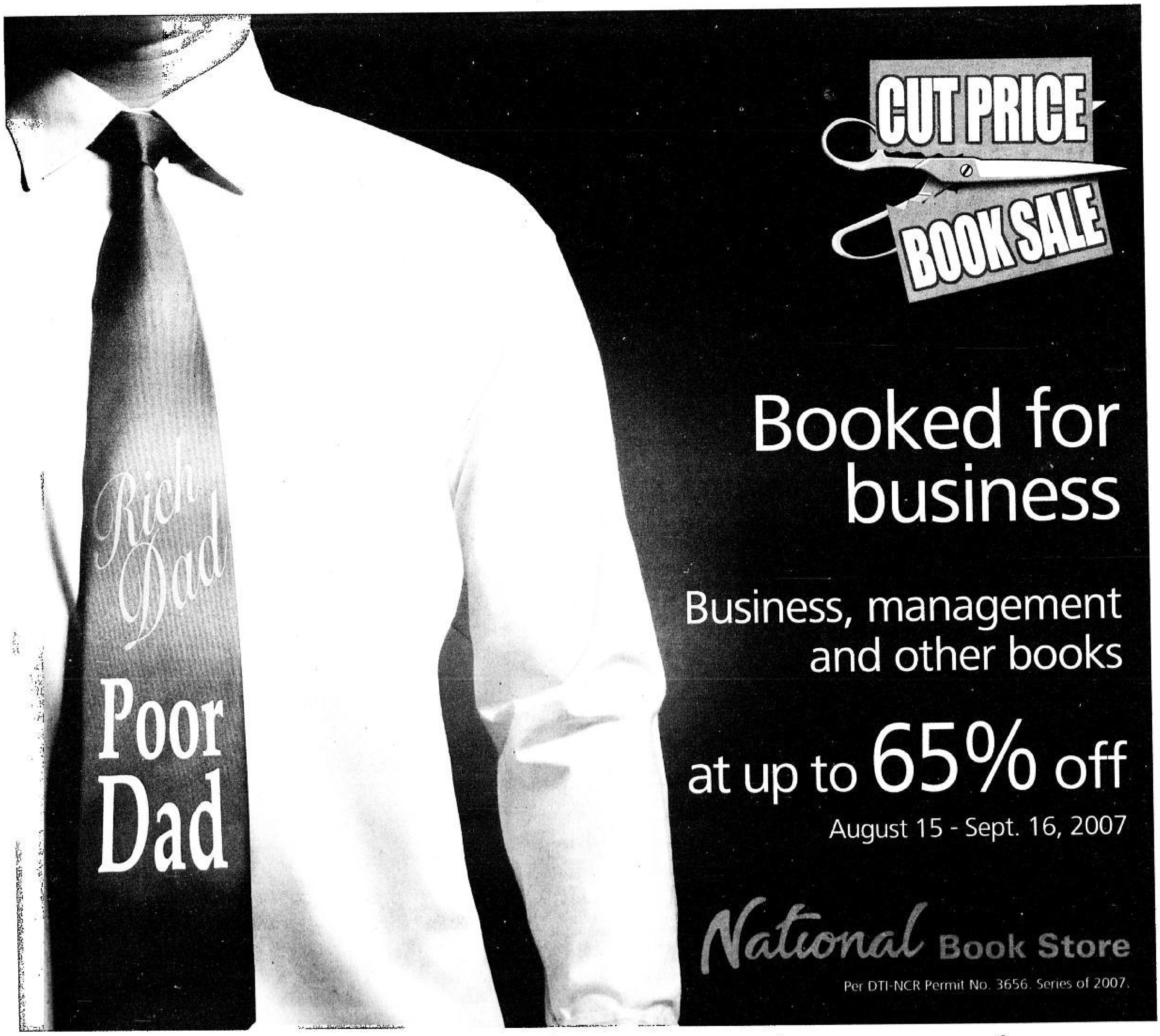
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Rich Dad
Poor Dad

Conversation with an amazing TV host

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

AFTER HOSTING THE FIRST SEAson of the AXN Original Production "The Amazing Race Asia," Singapore-based Chinese-American actor Allan Wu was deluged with endorsement deals, commercial offers and other various proposals—even invitations to star in a Filipino movie.

And while he did accept some of those irresistible offers (the Filipino flick sadly not being a part of it), he is now back as the host of season two of one of the world's greatest, most exciting and most successful reality TV franchises.

"The Amazing Race Asia" Season 2 (TARA 2) is set to premiere soon on AXN. While host Wu admits to trying to look a lot less like Phil Keoghan of the US edition and a lot more like himself in the new season, the show itself has undergone several exciting changes.

"You can never rest on your laurels," he says, referring to both his career and the show's success. Allan also states that while the first season put the show on the map, "TARA 2" will now be writing the map.

In an exclusive phoner with 2bU!, "TARA 2's" hot and sexy host reveals how not-so-nice some of the teams are in this season, what the challenges are like and how long he plans to be part of the show.

What can viewers expect from "TARA 2"?

You can expect a lot more surprises and a lot more drama. This year, the producers spent a lot of time and energy trying to pick out colorful and provocative and combustible contestants in the race and have them all thrown in the mix racing around the world. It's just a hundred percent unadulterated entertainment. The teams will go a lot farther. If you enjoyed last season, you'll definitely enjoy this season. It's even more exciting this year.

How different are the contestants in this new batch?

Last season, the teams were all quite nice people, this season they're laying their true colors out for everyone to see. Some of the teams even wanted to start fighting with me! They're very, very angry people!

With the new season we have new rules implemented also. Sometimes the teams refuse to accept their fate or the consequences of their actions. They think they're right.

Honestly, I think some of these teams might have been a little delusional but it obviously makes for great television, too.

Last year, all the teams were pretty much excited to be on the show. Last season, a lot of the teams were saying, wow, we're in the premiere, the maiden voyage of "The Amazing Race Asia." This time around, people know sort of what to expect but, I think, even more importantly, they are out to win that money and to be the champion. Some of them will stop at nothing to try and achieve that goal.

Are the contestants from "TARA 2" more interesting than those from the first season?

I would love to say most definitely for sure but I don't want to offend the first season contestants. But I definitely think they are more controversial. They are definitely more multifaceted and a lot more colorful.

Is there a special way of introducing the new season of "TARA"?

We're going to have a special episode before the actual premiere of the first leg of the race. It's called Racers Revealed and it gives the audience the chance to get more familiar with the racers before they actually start competing on the show. In that show, there's a good chance they're going to show some of these audition tapes so in the future, people will have a better idea of what it takes to be in the show.

Were there any improvements made?

For me personally as a host I think I needed to be more myself. I think I was trying probably too much to be like Phil (Keoghan), trying to fill Phil's shoes. But the show itself, people were saying there wasn't enough self driving or the teams were all always clumped up on the same flight. This year, you can expect none of that to really happen.

There's a lot more driving, with the teams going from location to location, which tests how well these teams work together.

How different are the challenges in this season?

There's probably less fear-related ones this time and more thinking and skill-related ones, too, but all the challenges reflect on the venue or location or country or continent we're at because we do travel very very far this time around.

Did the first season rate well?

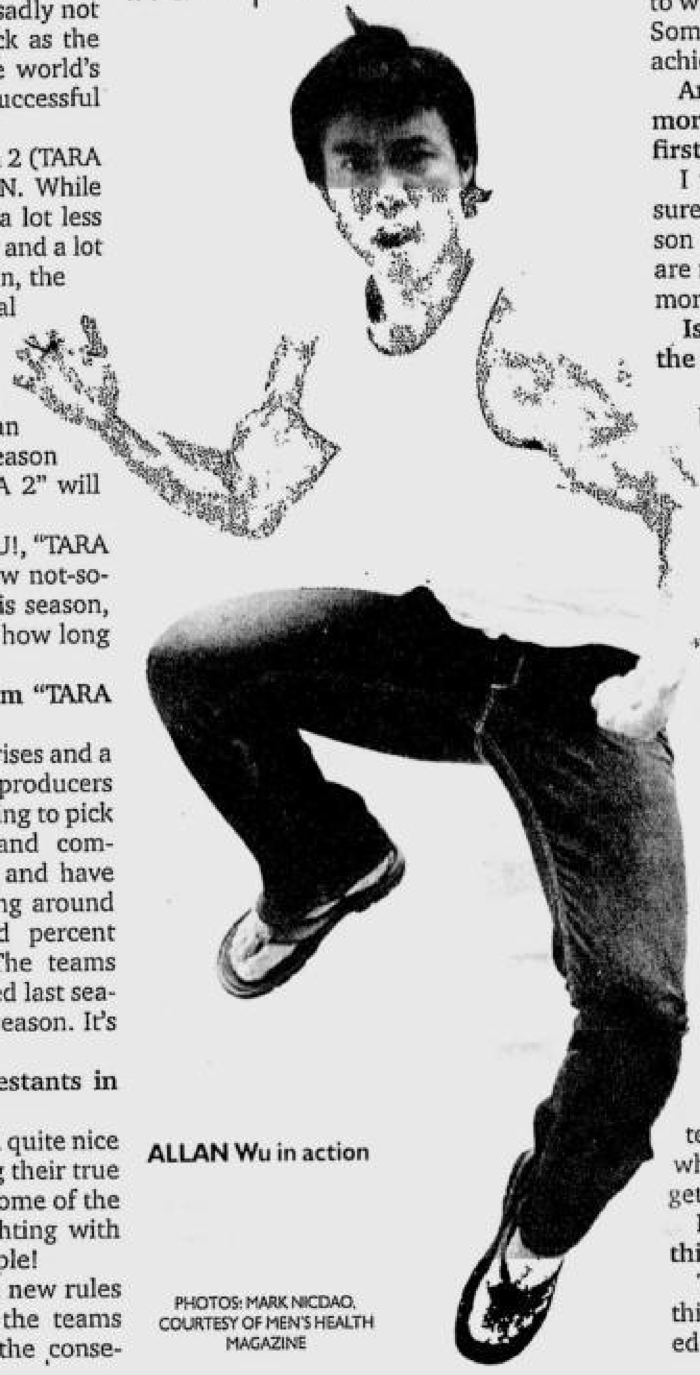
I heard about it from the producers and the TV station and they were all very excited with the ratings and viewership and response so I think that's part of the reason why we came back for season two. It was hard for me to imagine this season being better but this season's going to be off the wall.

How long will you be committed to "TARA"?

I am committed to as many as they need me for, so as long as the show is there and as long as I don't do too bad of a job, I think I'll still be in line to host and be a part of "The Amazing Race Asia." It's a unique, special and historic opportunity for me. It's by far the most exciting, the most memorable and the most enjoyable job that I have ever had.

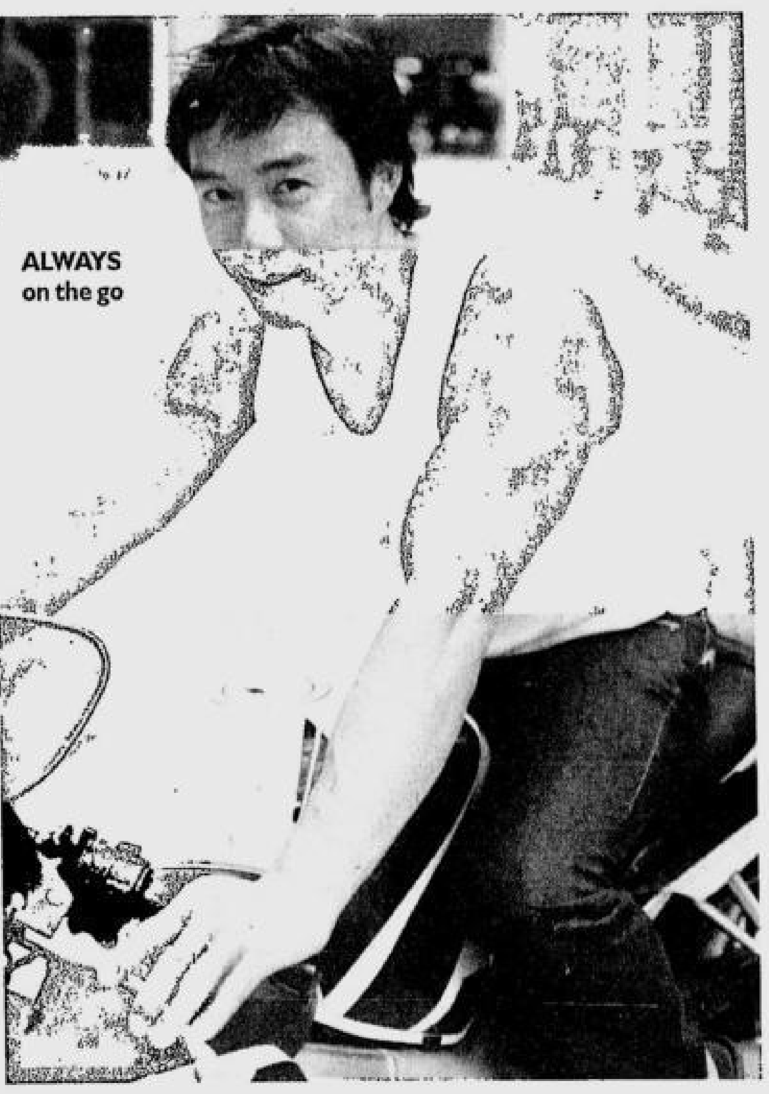
E-mail the author at ninomarksablan@yahoo.com

Chinese-American actor Allan Wu has been deluged with endorsement deals, commercial offers and an invitation to star in a Filipino movie



ALLAN Wu in action

PHOTOS: MARK NICDAO, COURTESY OF MEN'S HEALTH MAGAZINE



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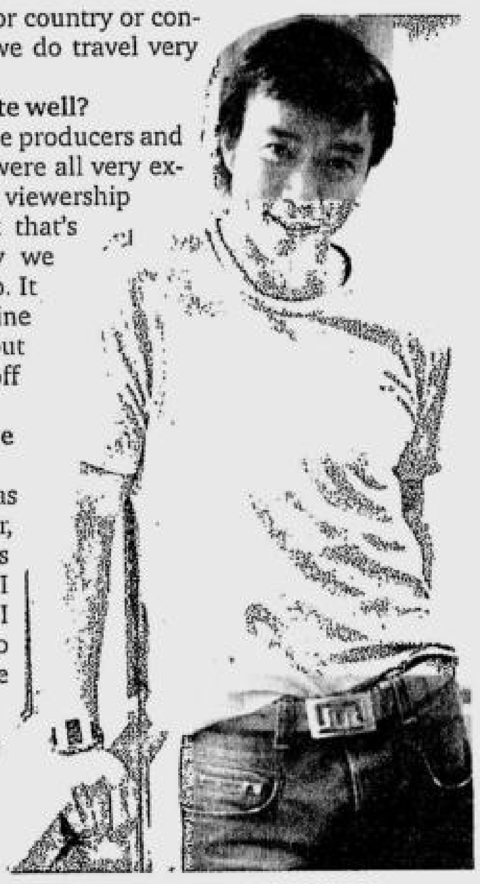


RELAXING in between takes

Good news

There's a lot to tell about this groundbreaking artist, apart from bad gossip

HOT R&B artist Akon

By Angelo Comsti
2bU! Correspondent

CELEBRATED SINGER AKON HAS been the talk of the town these days because of his controversial concert antics. So when news spread that the 27-year-old R&B artist was to perform before a crowd of 3,000 (tickets were limited) in Singapore last Aug. 18, the local press (this writer included) was more than eager to witness (and write) what could be the next day's entertainment headlines.

In demand

Thirty minutes into the concert, I arrived at Downtown East's D'Marquee Stadium, amazed that the crowd was constantly chanting Akon's name in the middle of a human beatbox's performance. It was a free-standing event, and I could understand why.

Right after the host's short introduction, DJ Benny D warmed up to everyone with his crazy mix of tunes and red kilt. He played familiar songs from the Black Eyed Peas, P. Diddy and Amy Winehouse and stood on the turntable, prompting everyone to join his wicked freestyle dancing. For a while, it felt like a Benny D concert until Akon emerged behind the curtains and began his repertoire with "Jam Rock" and "Shake Down," songs befitting the crowd's ear-shattering reaction.

Striptease

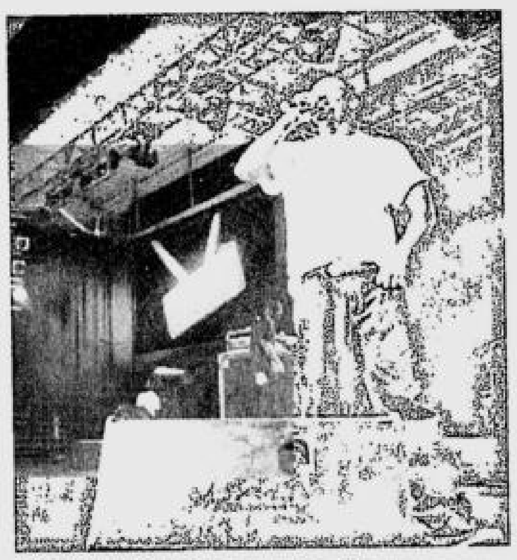
Still in anticipation of his latest antic, I watched closely as Akon walked close to the edge of the stage, vulnerable to the arms of many. He asked all to cross their arms in the air, as he sung "Soul Survivor." He followed it up with his hit single, "I Wanna Love You," and in the process of singing, stripped his bright yellow shirt to reveal the mark of a bona fide hip-hop artist, a fitted undershirt and a huge silver medallion. This triggered deafening screams from the ladies. Ironically, when Akon threw his shirt to the audience, a tall guy snagged it.

The strip show continued as he took off his last piece of clothing to reveal a body as tight as the undershirt he was wearing. As the women extended their arms to reach for the shirt, Akon began to tell the story of how he fell in love with a stripper, something his parents detested. This, as it turned out, was the inspiration behind the song "Don't Matter," which he smoothly segued to. Upon hearing it, the three Pinoy kids standing beside me, as if by impulse, break-danced on the floor. Soon as he started his next song, "Mama Africa," Akon, like a sacrificial lamb, headed to the crowd and submitted himself to the people, who expectedly tugged his pants, brushed his abs and pulled his head down to steal a kiss.

Women on top

In what seemingly was a newsworthy moment, Akon picked up a young girl and placed her on his shoulders. DJ Benny D pulled an excited girl from the crowd and gently did the same, worried it might ruin his mohawk. The girls barely moved as Akon, much to the disappointment of the people, performed his last song, "I Tried So Hard." In an effort to make the audience forget Akon's absence, DJ Benny D played another round of mixed music.

The concert lasted a little over 90 minutes with a total of 15 songs, and the whole time I was anticipating something controversial to happen. But in the end, I realized that there was something else much more interesting to write about Akon. And that's the fact that he pulled off a great and entertaining concert, one that did not need controversy to be worthy of being written about.



ONSTAGE at D'Marquee Stadium

WORKING the crowd into a frenzy

AUTHOR (right) with the singer and several fans

moving to the next level
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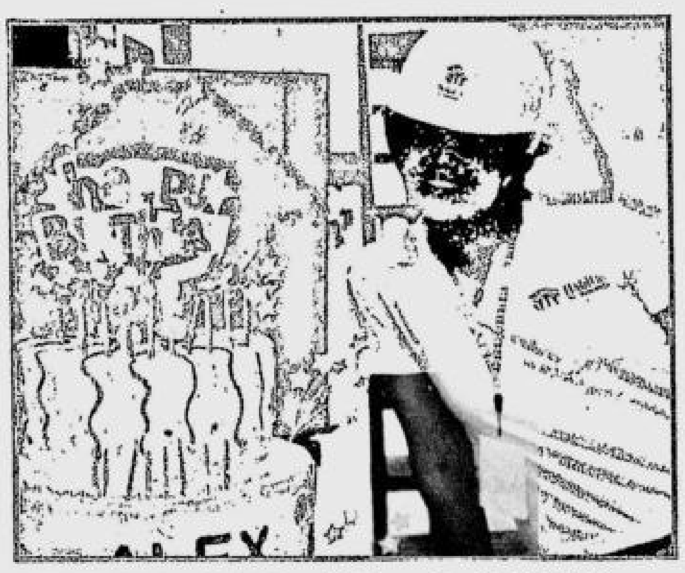
PAINTING the walls of the newly built house



VOLUNTEER and birthday girl Alexandra Madrigal Eduque

WITH HABITAT for Humanity volunteers

Compassionate teener builds homes on her 17th Birthday

By Kris Gonzalez
Contributor

HABITAT FOR HUmanity Philippines (HFHP) is a Christian housing ministry that assists the poor with their housing needs. HFHP's life and blood are the volunteers who give their time, effort and talent to Habitat's cause.

Habitat for Humanity is particularly proud of a very special, dedicated volunteer. She is 17-year-old Alexandra Madrigal Eduque. Exposed to Habitat through an immersion program run by the school she attends, International School of Manila, Alex's "Habititis" became so intense she spent an entire summer building homes for the needy at Baseco Bagong Buhay Village in Tondo, Manila.

Just like any 17-year-old, Alex shops, watches movies, goes on gimmicks and does everything else teeners do. But she makes sure she squeezes in some philanthropy into her young life.

Eduque's example shows that the youth can definitely have fun and make a difference. Take her recent birthday celebration for example.

Her actual birth date falls on September 5, but to make way for HFHP's September Bicol Express Caravan (an effort to rebuild Bicol after the ravages of typhoon Reming), Alex instead requested to throw a Habitat Birthday Building Bash at the Rotaryville Family Townhomes in FTI, Taguig City, which was held from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. last August 18.

Over 75 of her closest friends and relatives were invited, including her aunt, Sen. Jamby Madrigal, classmate and famous racer Matteo Guidicelli, and Taguig City Mayor Freddie Tinga. She also asked her mom, family and friends to sponsor houses in lieu of birthday gifts.

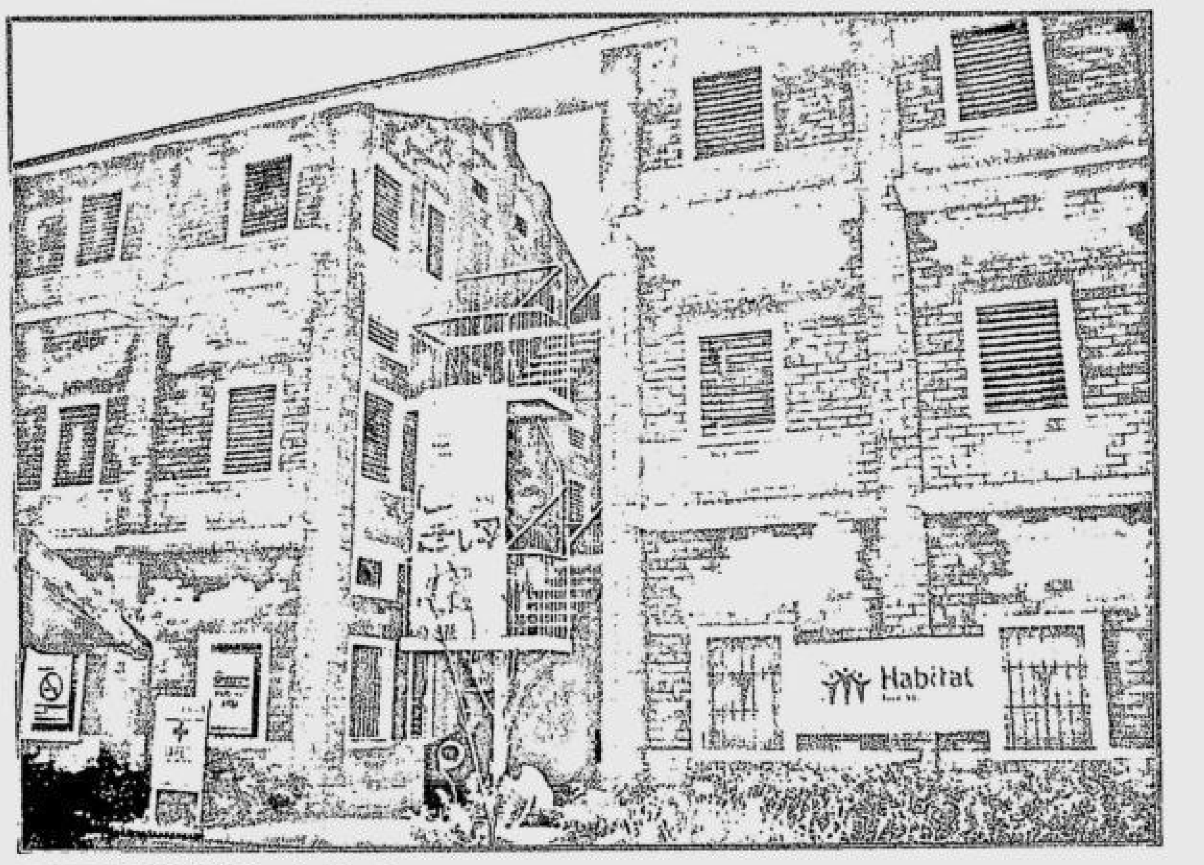
Her purpose for holding her party at a Habitat building site? "I want to share with my friends and family how fulfilling and rewarding giving back is. I want everyone to come, enjoy good food with me and see that no matter what age you are, you can build. You can make a difference."

"*Ang* 'Habititis' *ay isang uri ng sakit na nakakabuti ng isang tao dahil nakakatulong ka sa marami, napapaunlad mo ang buhay ng marami at napapasaya mo ang maraming pamilya sa pamamagitan ng pagtulong sa* Habitat for Humanity Philippines. *Nakakataba ng puso dahil nakikita mo ang resulta sa bawat dingding na iyong napapatayo. Kaya tumulong na rin kayo sa* Habitat for Humanity Philippines *dahil hindi pa huli ang lahat upang makapagpaunlad kayo ng buhay*," she said in her message to her peers.

Though the day started with thunderstorms, the clouds eventually cleared to let Eduque and her guests push through with the event. The Birthday Building Bash opened with a prayer and a briefer on Habitat for Humanity's projects, after which work assignments were given.

Guests clamored to paint walls, mold concrete interlocking blocks, fabricate rebars and assemble steel frames. Lunch consisted of *lechon*, chicken, *pancit* and *halo-halo*, which Eduque offered to home partners, skilled workers, drivers, bodyguards, household help, the staff of Manila Water, Taguig local government employees, members of the Philippine National Police, Habitat for Humanity Philippines staff and other guests.

Midway through lunch, special guests Matteo Guidicelli, Mayor Freddie Tinga and Sen. Jamby Madrigal arrived, in time for Eduque's speech and grand birthday cake blowout. She then shared with her guests how the Habitat bug had bitten her.



THE ROTARYVILLE Family Townhomes

"One person infected with 'Habititis' is not enough, and that's why I decided to conceptualize this Birthday Build," she said. "I'm hoping that at the end of today I'm not the only one infected with it. I'm hoping that all of you will be, as well, and I hope that you'd find this experience both fulfilling and fun."

Alex then blew out her 17 candles and shared with her guests her birthday cake, which the children enjoyed immensely. Colorful balloons decorating the place were given to the kids to take home as a remembrance of the "ate" that cares so much for them.

Eduque's friends and family went home carrying loot bags containing HFHP caps, work gloves and pencil holders/paper weights shaped like mini-concrete interlocking blocks.

Dulaang UP mounts Shakespeare's 'As You Like It'

DULAANG UP, ON ITS 32ND THEATER season and in celebration of the University of the Philippines Centennial, stages William Shakespeare's "As You Like It" in English and Filipino, under Jose Estrella's direction. The Filipino translation, billed as "Paano Man Ang Ibig," is by the late National Artist for Literature and Theater Rolando Tinio.

The cast includes Richard Cunanan, Dolly Gutierrez, Mailes Kanapi, Paolo O'Hara, Randy Villarama, Mike Manotoc and Nathasia Garrucha.

One of the most innovative directors in Philippine Theater today, Estrella has directed other Shakespearean plays like "Macbeth," "Love's Labour's Lost" and "A Winter's Tale," all showcasing interpretations that are uniquely hers.

In a review of "Love's Labour's Lost" (Ang Ligawang Ligaw), writer Cory Llamas observed that she has "carved her own niche of tackling difficult, provocative material, adding new nuances and angles to the more familiar ones."

Another example of her original style was when she chose the Cordillera region as the setting for "Macbeth," utilizing the local culture's music, dance and costumes for Shakespeare's drama of royal greed and murder.

"As You Like It/Paano Man Ang Ibig" runs Aug. 29-Sept. 16 at the Wilfrido Ma. Guerrero Theater, 2/F, Palma Hall, UP Diliman, Quezon City.

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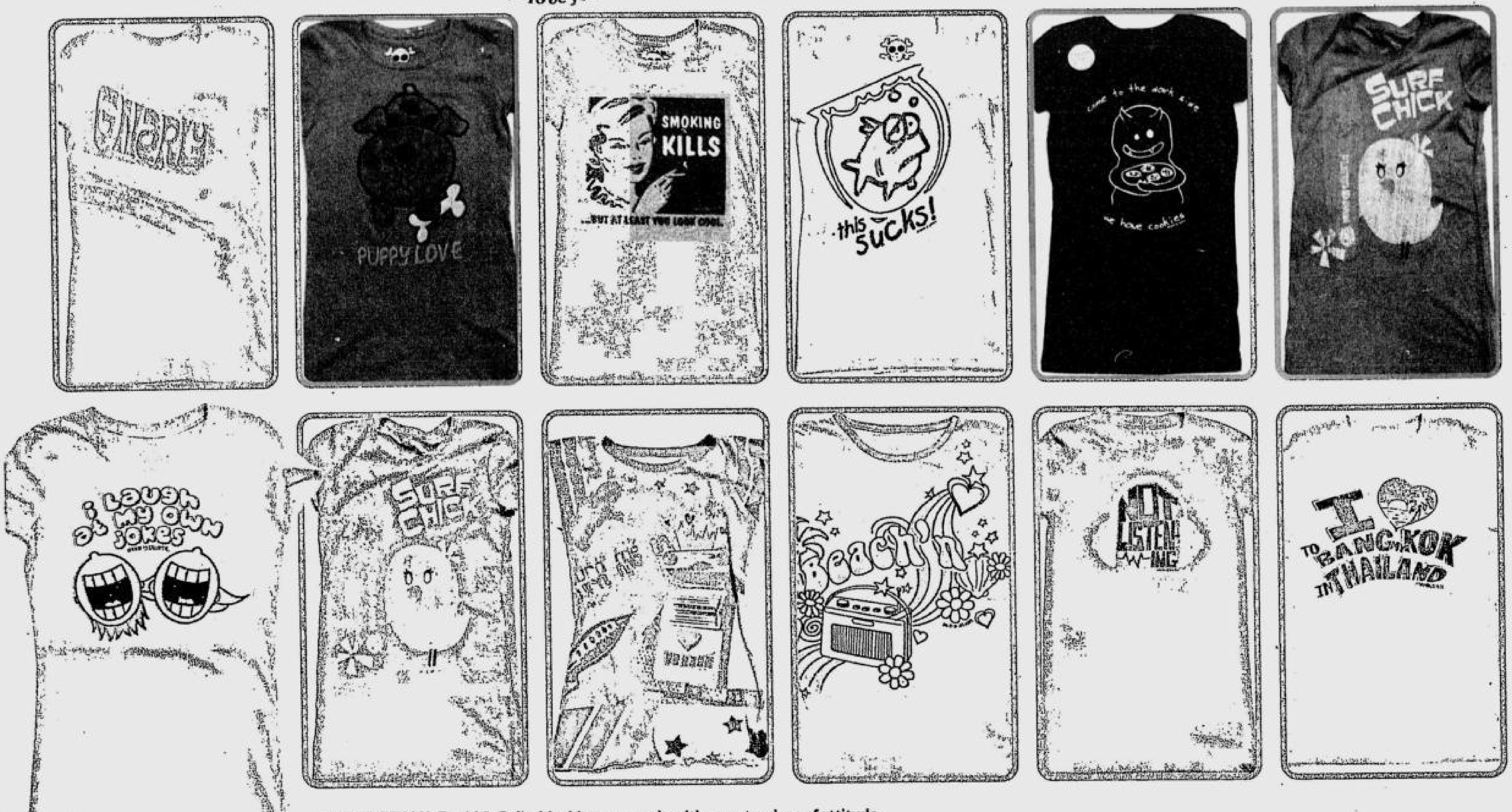


T-SHIRT TALK. David & Goliath's shirts are made with an extra dose of attitude.

SHOP SHOOTER

Wearable Wit

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

LIKE MANY GREAT THINGS, David & Goliath was borne out of boredom.

Todd Goldman, an accountancy student at the University of Florida, found himself doodling a lot in class. But the doodling led to more than just missed lessons—it became the springboard for what has become a popular brand.

In just six months, Goldman was able to come up with a 30-page catalog packed with witty one-liners, graphics and designs that gave people their first taste of David & Goliath's tongue-in-cheek humor in 2000.

Named after Goldman's father and dog—and not the Bible characters—David & Goliath soon had a growing fan base that included hot Hollywood personalities.

In the United States, David & Goliath is available in boutiques like Kitson and Fred Segal and retail outlets like Urban Outfitters, Nordstrom and Pacific Sunwear.

But people living in other parts of the globe get their fill of Goldman's humor from 3,500 outlets worldwide.

Terry S.A., the same company that brought Havaianas to the country, is responsible for supplying Pinoys with a dose of David & Goliath.

More than just T-shirts

Although the brand is still best known for its extremely comfortable shirts emblazoned with sarcastic quips, witty one-liners and funny designs, it has expanded its line.

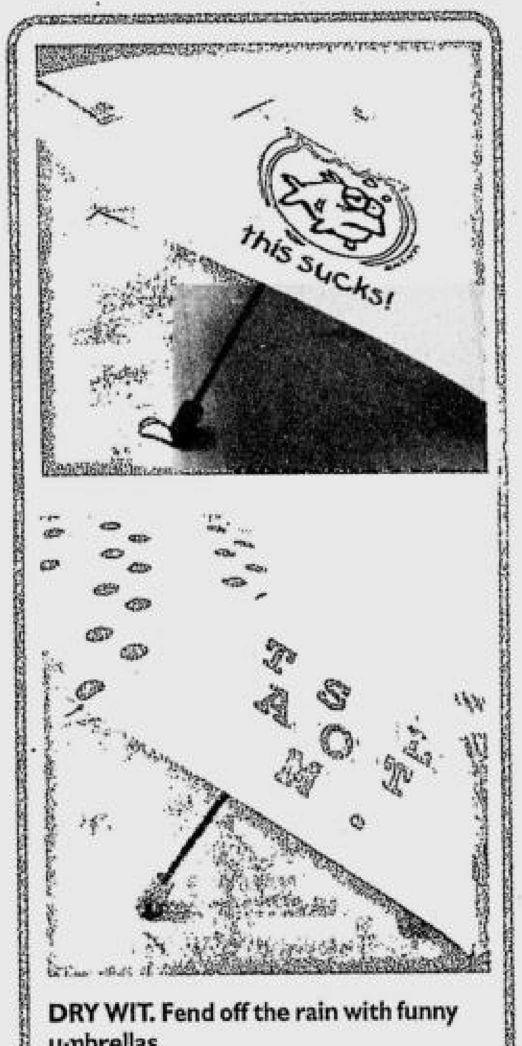
Today, David & Goliath also offers tank tops, pajama sets, notebooks, baby clothes, lip gloss, umbrellas, bags, wallets and more.

"Bite me," "Chicks rule," "Beauty is only a light switch away," "Smoking kills."

Why speak when you can let your clothes and accessories do the talking?

Visit David & Goliath boutiques at Bonifacio High Street, Power Plant Mall and TriNoma. The brand is also available in Rustan's Makati.

If you can't say it, let David & Goliath say it for you. And no, we don't mean the Bible characters



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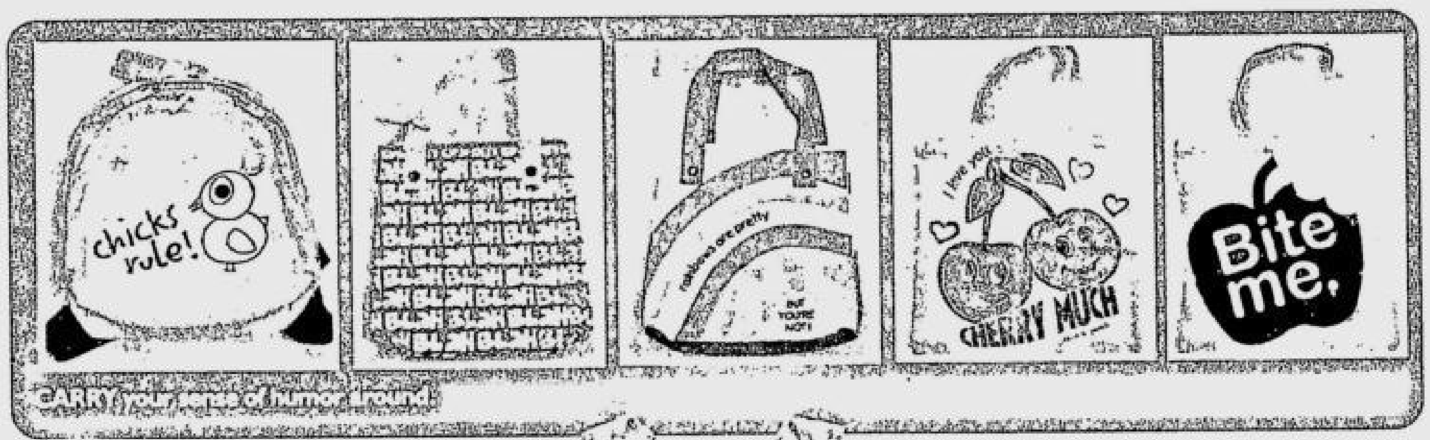

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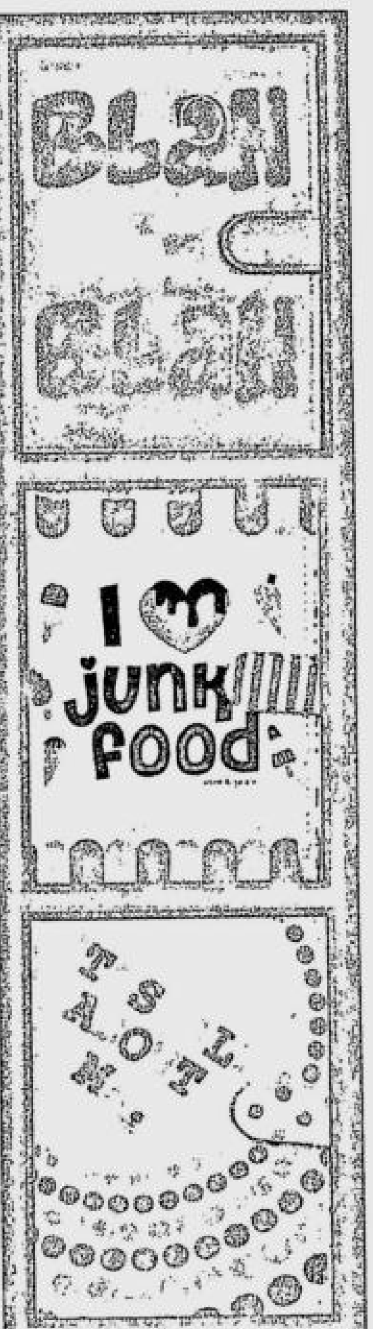

PAPER FETISH. Fill them up with your own attempts at wit.

If you take me shopping I'll pretend I'm your girlfriend.
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HIT the sack with these comfy creations.

Digging for premium fashion

ROCKWELL TARGETS A NEW BREED of fashionistas with its newest lifestyle section, Archaelogy, which features a roster of unique stores showcasing an array of designer wear, stylish vintage pieces, edgy street wear and quirky accessories.

Archaeology's philosophy is to create a style culture that provides fashion-forward consumers with the means to discover their own personal styles.

Sensual, feminine silhouettes take center stage at hip boutiques Maud, Graxie, Luca, Marni's Room and Ruth & Esther. Shift seamlessly from day to night with stunning tops and skirts in vivid colors and arresting prints that are perfect for dates and glam night-outs.

Dress for success with classy clothes from Details & Porcupine, Ilaya Couture, and Pilar. Look sleek, smart and stylish in power suits, tailored jackets and other office staples. Or stand out from the crowd with funky and innovative graphic tees from Team Manila, T-Box, Grey One Social, and David & Goliath.

Accent your chic wardrobe with playful accessories in all permutations from Evita Peroni, CRU and CamadiV. Pick out the perfect baubles from an array of gorgeous necklaces, bracelets, earrings, brooches and other fancy pieces.

Archaeology presents a wide range of boutique shops owned mostly by young, cutting-edge designers. Like an archaeological dig, the Power Plant Mall's newest section is filled with fabulous finds every time.

Archaeology is located at the R2 level of the Rockwell Center's Power Plant Mall.

ALL GLAMMED UP. Models basked in style with hip offerings from the fashion wing's cult labels and homegrown designers.

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

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The 'One Chance' that was enough

By Pocholo Concepcion

HONG KONG—PAUL POTTS' VOICE sounded raspy and almost faltered near the end of "Time to Say Goodbye" ("Con Te Partiro"), the first of three numbers he sang for the media during his promotional appearance here recently.

He would later explain that he had a nasty case of laryngitis and was getting over a heavy cold.

"Opera can be very challenging," he said, laughing, "especially when you're running out of breath."

Born in Bristol, England and currently a resident of South Wales, Potts, 37, is the overnight celebrity who won the maiden edition of "Britain's Got Talent" ("BTG"), the UK version of the widely popular search-for-a-singing star TV show "American Idol."

Bowled over

From the auditions to the finals, Potts reportedly had the judges, including producer Simon Cowell, bowled over with his no-nonsense renditions of opera classics.

After the finals, Cowell lost no time in booking London studios to record Potts.

The finished work, the 10-track CD "One Chance" (Sony BMG), topped the UK charts for three consecutive weeks and has sold 300,000 units.

It has also become the number one album in the classical chart of HMV Hong Kong, a major record store chain.

Sony BMG hosted the press conference for Potts at the Langham Place Hotel in Mong Kok, a district on Hong Kong's Kowloon peninsula.

Toss-coin decision

Potts recounted that he first learned about "BTG" from the Internet, although he was unsure whether to join the contest due to low self-confidence and fear of rejection.

"I decided to go through it by tossing a coin," he recounted. "If it was heads, I'd join; tails, I'd cancel. It wasn't a double-headed coin, of course, and the rest, as they say, is history."

Potts revealed that his debut album's title had special meaning. "'Britain's Got Talent' was my one chance," he said. "If I didn't join it, I don't believe I would have a second chance. My motivation really was to perform at the Cardiff (Wales) Millennium Center."

His audition piece, which he also sang at the finals, was "Nessun Dorma," from the Puccini opera "Turandot."

Potts fell in love with classical music at an early age. Listening to it was also a source of solace, as he considered himself "different" from the other kids in school, who used to bully him.

Singing lessons

In 1999, Potts first sang opera in a karaoke competition dressed as Luciano Pavarotti. It wasn't mentioned whether he won, but in the same year he appeared as a contestant in Michael Barrymore's "My Kind of Music," a UK TV game show.

Although Potts didn't get the trophy, he was awarded 8,000 pounds which he used to pay for singing lessons in Italy. In the course of the sessions, he was chosen as one of the best students and made to perform in front of Pavarotti.

The experience apparently gave Potts the confidence to pursue a growing passion. It led him to the Bath Opera, an amateur company in Somerset, England.

Although he didn't get paid, Potts was happy to have performed on four occasions—most notably the title role in Verdi's "Don Carlos," and as the Prince of Persia and also the Herald in "Turandot." He also sang for the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in front of an audience of 15,000 and toured Northern Italy as a soloist.

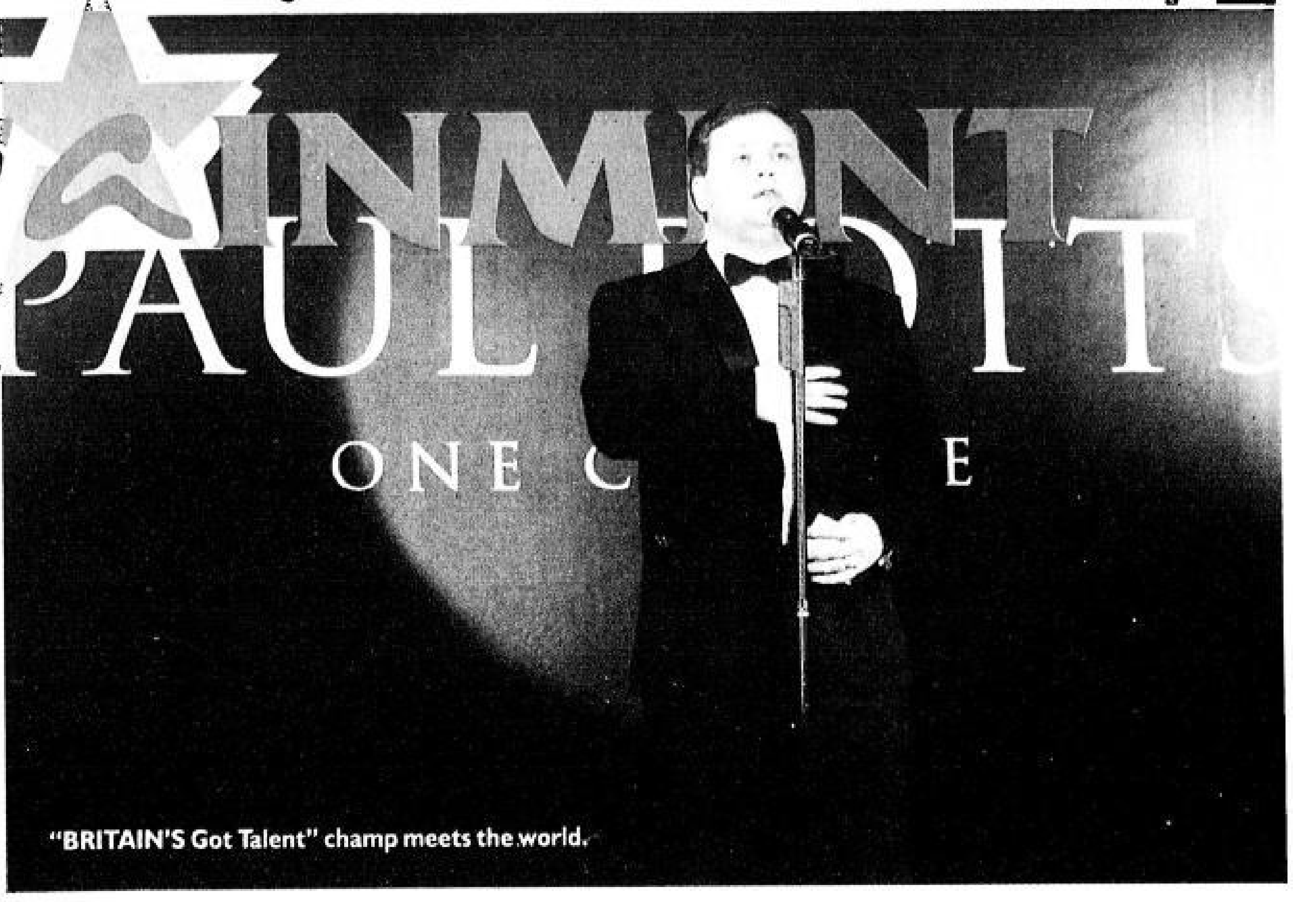
Bicycle accident

But a bicycle accident from which he broke a collarbone prevented Potts from doing more opera. Just before deciding to join "BGT," he was a local branch manager at the Carphone Warehouse, Europe's largest independent mobile phone retailer.

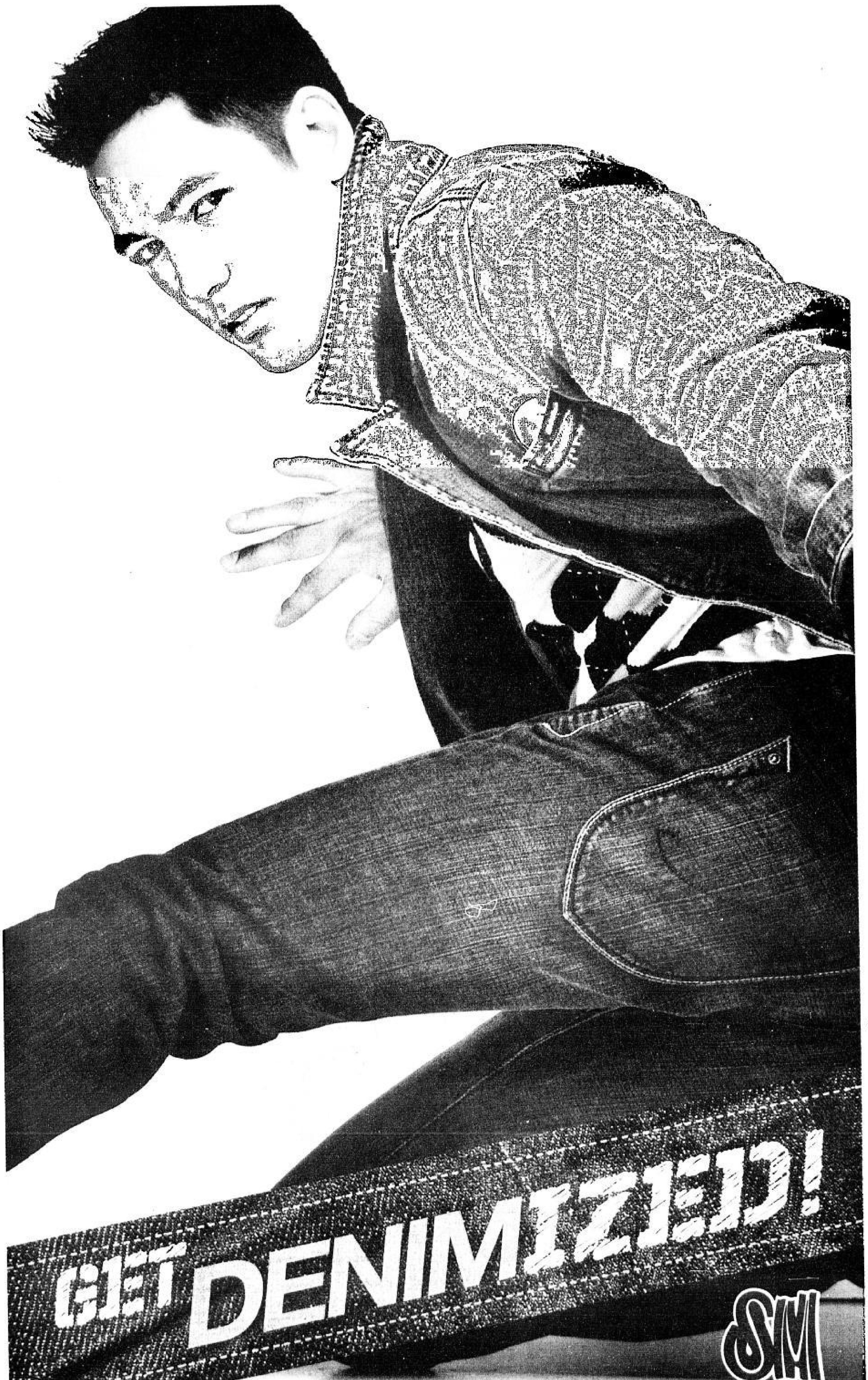
Now Potts can afford to quit the day job, having received 100,000 pounds as prize money from "BGT." He plans to spend some of it on a safari trip with wife Julie-Ann, who was present at the Hong Kong press con.

Asked how he prepares for a performance, Potts replied: "I generally don't eat anything two to three hours before a performance. It's more of a superstition more than anything else. I also avoid eating anything with garlic in it. My wife hates garlic, although I love it (laughs). But I also avoid lettuce because it makes you lose a lot of air. So I tend to avoid salad before a show."

THE 'ONE'/ E2



"BRITAIN'S Got Talent" champ meets the world.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SONY BMG Asia president Kelvin Wadsworth (L) presents Paul Potts with a traditional Chinese outfit.

'I just take each day as it comes'

IN THE LUXURY OF A HOTEL SUITE, media people from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Singapore, Korea and the Philippines were given 15 minutes each with new opera singing sensation: "I just take each day as it comes," he repeatedly said.

The following are excerpts of INQUIRER Entertainment's interview:

Did you think you were good enough to turn professional while singing with the Bath Opera?

Although I did a couple of big roles in Bath and enjoyed singing as an amateur, I had a safety net in those circumstances. I was being someone else on stage. I was not being me. But in "BGT," I was going on as me, which made it a big risk. I'm not much of a risk-taker because in the past, I've sent (audition) tapes and never had any response.

You spent 8,000 pounds for singing lessons in Italy. You were that serious in learning opera.

I went to Italy to improve my singing and learn, have a background on the language, speak to real Italians, just to experience the atmosphere, the customs, culture. I just enjoyed being there. But I didn't do that to become professional.

Are you prepared for criticism in your debut album?

I haven't paid attention to anything negative. I enjoyed making the album. But it's not a standpoint on where I want to be. This is where I am at the moment. I know I've got some distance to cover. I don't profess to have complete knowledge of opera.

Are you consciously encouraging pop music fans to try listening to opera?

There's no such thing as a closed club. Opera can sometimes be mistaken as only for a select group of people. I think it's important that opera is seen to be for everyone. Certainly Puccini wrote it for everyone.

What attracted you to opera in the first place?

The emotion behind it. I started listening to classical music when I was 11 after watching "E.T." [The movie won for Best Original Score, Sound and Sound Effects in the 55th Academy Awards.] It was the emotional part in the music that really got me. I also remember walking down the street listening to Tchaikovsky's "6th Symphony," jumping out of my skin and getting weird looks from people. And then I bought a cheap live album by Jose Carreras.

The 'One Chance' ...

From page E1

A Chinese reporter wondered whether he also listened to pop.

"I listen to Snow Patrol," Potts remarked. "I'm very fond of Queen, especially Freddie Mercury singing 'Who Wants to Live Forever'.... I also like groups like U2 and Dire Straits. I listen to all sorts, actually."

During his three-song performance, Potts was caught glancing at a small piece of paper containing lyrics in his left hand. Other instances from that part of the event prodded another reporter to ask: Why was he looking at the ceiling while singing?

"I'm not sure," Potts answered. "Maybe I was looking up the heavens for deliverance."

The press broke out in laughter.

Pressed for a parting message, Potts obliged:

"If you get an opportunity to follow what you love doing, just grab it. Enjoy doing it, whatever it is. In my case, I just love singing so much that it inspired me to go beyond the usual thing. I find talking very nerve-wracking, but singing relaxes me."

(A one-on-one with INQUIRER on this page.)

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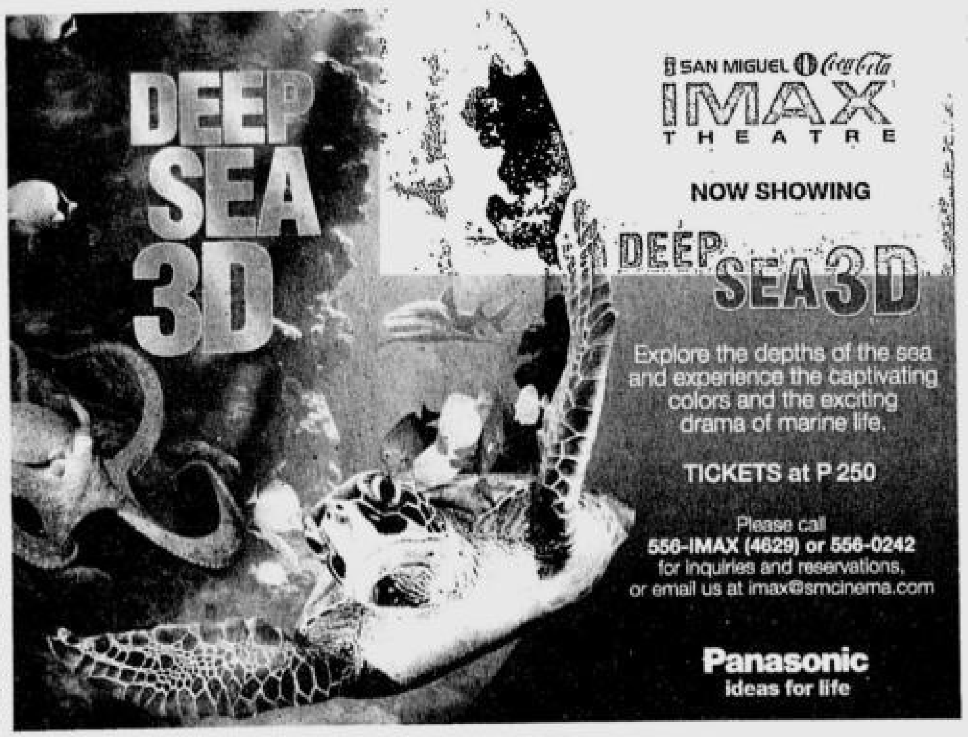

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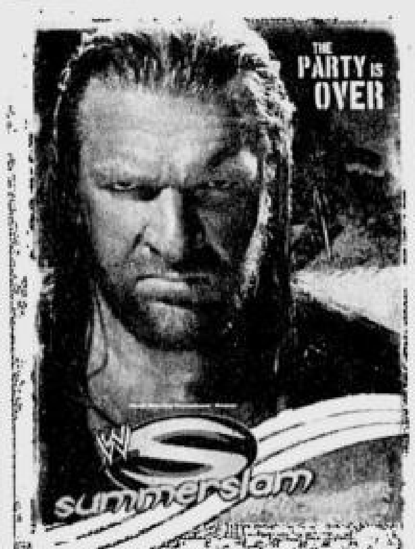

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2 SINKING OF JAPAN
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4 A LOVE STORY
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2	INVASION	1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00	PG-13
3	BOURNE ULTIMATUM	1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00	PG-13
4	1408	1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00	PG-13

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② 1408 MTRCB PG-13 12:40, 3:00 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
③ EVAN ALMIGHTY MTRCB GP
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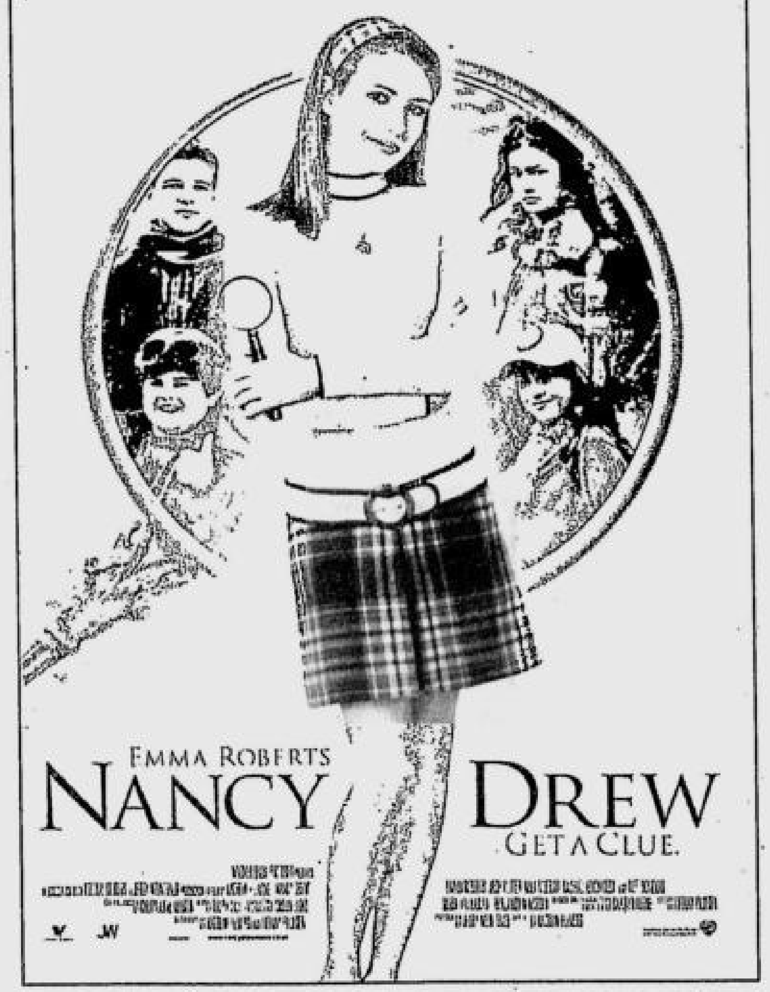

EMMA ROBERTS
NANCY DREW
GET A CLUE.
3x16BW Main 1sheet

CHEER FACTOR

The latest in film publicity? A barf bag

LOS ANGELES—Genius Products home entertainment is including a paper bag with each copy of its new "Dirty Sanchez" DVD of outlandish pranks and stunts performed by a troupe of four British men who go by the same name.

The "barf bags" underscore the message that the DVD is so sickening that even its makers fear viewers may vomit. "(The 'barf bag') was a fun way for us to communicate directly with fans, and tell them what the DVD is all about," said Scott Heffron, Genius' vice president of marketing.

Reuters

"A story about what love and family are truly about"

RYAN AGONCILLO PAULEEN LUNA JASON ABALOS and MAJA SALVADOR

My Kuya's Wedding

A FILM BY TOPEL LEE

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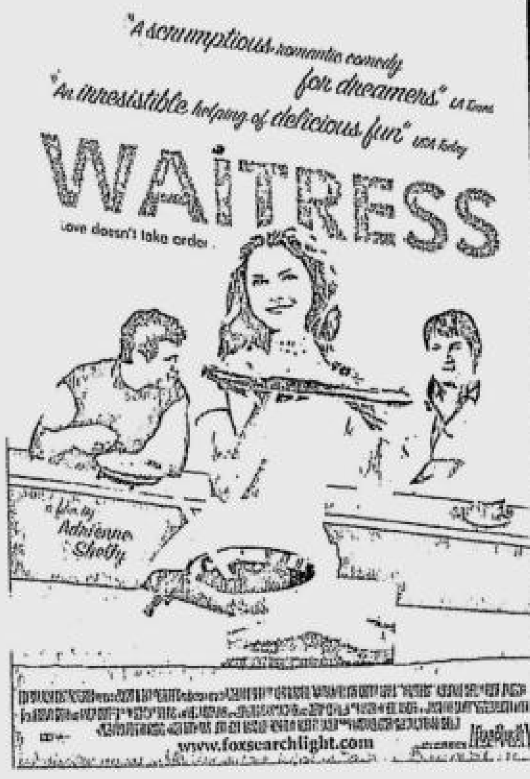
"A scrumptious romantic comedy for dreamers." LA Times
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THE INVASION	LAST LEGION	1408	
DON'T LOOK BACK	MY KUYA'S WEDDING	RUSH HOUR 3 HAIRSPRAY	
A LOVE STORY	WAITRESS	BOURNE ULTIMATUM EVAN ALMIGHTY	THE INVASION

ALI MALL 5

1	LAST LEGION	2	1408	3	THE INVASION
4	A LOVE STORY	5	MY KUYA'S WEDDING		DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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	4 RISE	5 SURF'S UP	6 A LOVE STORY	7 HAIRSPRAY
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GREENBELT 3	1 THX HAIRSPRAY GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 DISTURBIA GUARANTEED SEATS	4 RUSH HOUR 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 EVAN ALMIGHTY GUARANTEED SEATS	
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	3 EVAN ALMIGHTY	4 DISTURBIA	5 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 EVAN ALMIGHTY	2 LICENSE TO WED	3 A LOVE STORY	4 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
MARKET! MARKET!	1 A LOVE STORY	2 HAIRSPRAY		
	3 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM	4 EVAN ALMIGHTY	5 DISTURBIA	
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TriNoma - 901 3000

Ayala

glorietta	Ansons Exhibit August 20 to September 2, 2007 at the Activity Center
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ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Alabang Town Center Grand Grocery Shopping Spree Promo July 1 to August 31, 2007; Mallwide
AYALA CENTER CEBU	Uyfang Kiosk August 3 to 30, 2007 at the AFEC Access
MARKET! MARKET!	Multi Car Show August 31, 2007 at the Central Plaza
Greenbelt Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents Disney's CINDERELLA Kids at REP's Globe Theater - Opens August 11, 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710
Ayala MUSEUM	Elements Photoconstructed Realities August 16 to 29, 2007 For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org
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DEITHER OCAMPO

EDU MANZANO

MARIAN RIVERA

More suitors for Marian after 'Marimar'

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

> 'Dong doesn't let guy friends visit me on the set'

"KILIG FACTOR" RUNS HIGH WHEN you're around **Marian Rivera** and **Dingdong Dantes**. Their affection and sweetness for each other is no put-on at all.

"I gently remind Dong to stop doing his annoying mannerism every now and then," Marian says, giggling. "I'm used to it but others might find it weird. He does it unconsciously so I have to call his attention when he's at it again."

She obviously has grown fond of her leading man to the point of learning to live with his idiosyncrasies. Marian rambles on like a girl talking about her crush.

"Dong is so *pikon* but in a cute way. He's sweet to me but he doesn't realize it sometimes. He doesn't allow my guy friends to visit me on the set. Neither does his GF **Karylle** drop by. Respeto *lang sa* love team *at* work *namin*."

Marian admits that ever since she became "Marimar," her suitors increased. "*Katawa lang.* One actor is almost like a stalker na *kasi kahit saan ako pumunta bigla siyang susulpot*."

Her legion of male admirers will be thrilled to know that Marian is now ready to pose for men's glossy mags as long as the pictorial's thrust will be a la Marimar. Marian's never had it so good.

With sheer determination, the new Marimar is bent on finding a throne to call her own.

New game show

I had so much fun as one of the mob members in the pilot episode of Edu Manzano's new game show "1 vs 100" (Saturdays, 7:30 p.m., ABS-CBN 2). Although it took six hours before taping started due to technical glitches, it was worth the wait. In my book, Edu is unbeatable in the game show genre.

Too bad I got eliminated right away. *Mea culpa*! I knew the correct answer but I pressed the wrong button. I just got so caught up in the frenzy of the moment. I won't be surprised if "1 vs 100" soon becomes No. 1 with its 100 percent excitement factor.

Diet turns 10

Diether Ocampo is celebrating his 10 colorful years in show biz. Unlike other matinee idols who are of the flash in the pan variety, Diet has metamorphosed into one of the finest actors in his league.

His unforgettable moment in the biz? "Meeting **FPJ** and shaking his hands. I froze!" Diet recalls. And his most embarrassing experience? "When I first came out in ASAP and danced live, I totally forgot the steps so I exited without finishing my number," he says, laughing.

Diether is the sum total of all those moments and memories. Take a bow, Diet on your 10th year of being a perfect "10."

Guess list

- Guess who this married action star is. He reprimanded a reporter because he thinks that the writer was the one who spilled the beans about his pregnant beauty queen GF. Little does the action star know that it's one of his exes who squealed on him. By sending his GF to LA (where she's due to give birth), he's escaping media scrutiny. But how long can he hide from his own ghost?
- Guess who this sexy star is. She lamented, "*Sayang* the indie film I made. The story was great. Except for my co-star (a separated actress) who was a major headache during our shoot. The movie would have been better off without her in the cast." Hmm… I'm sure if the sexy star will be asked to do another indie film with the prima donna actress, her answer will be "Inding Indie na!"

MyTV

Celebs are hooked on MyTV. They can now catch their fave shows on CNN, ETC, MTV, National Geographic, Pinoy Box Office, an exclusive History Channel and more right on their Smart phone during their shooting breaks. Check out the free trial service for all Smart users. My oh myTV!

Mag launch

Celebs and party goers are expected to grace the launch of new mag "In Thing" at Jay-R's Rockcandy Bar (Glorietta 2, Makati) on Aug. 31, 9 p.m. The event is dubbed "I'm In! The Fashion Party."

The glossy bi-monthly mag has an edgy format focusing on lifestyle, fashion and the arts. The party will feature the "Unblithe" collection of Cebuano designer Ray Kuan who designed the stuff exclusively for the mag. Be there or be square!

Music oasis

For over a decade now, my "headquarters" Watering Hole (Ground Floor, Carpark Building, Shangrila Plaza Mall Mandaluyong) has been an oasis for food and music lovers. Feast on their sumptuous dishes while enjoying quality entertainment by solo acts and bands of various genres, some of which have already formally launched their recording careers like **Lala**, **Dianne Elise** and the band 3rd Avenue. See you at the Hole!

E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com.

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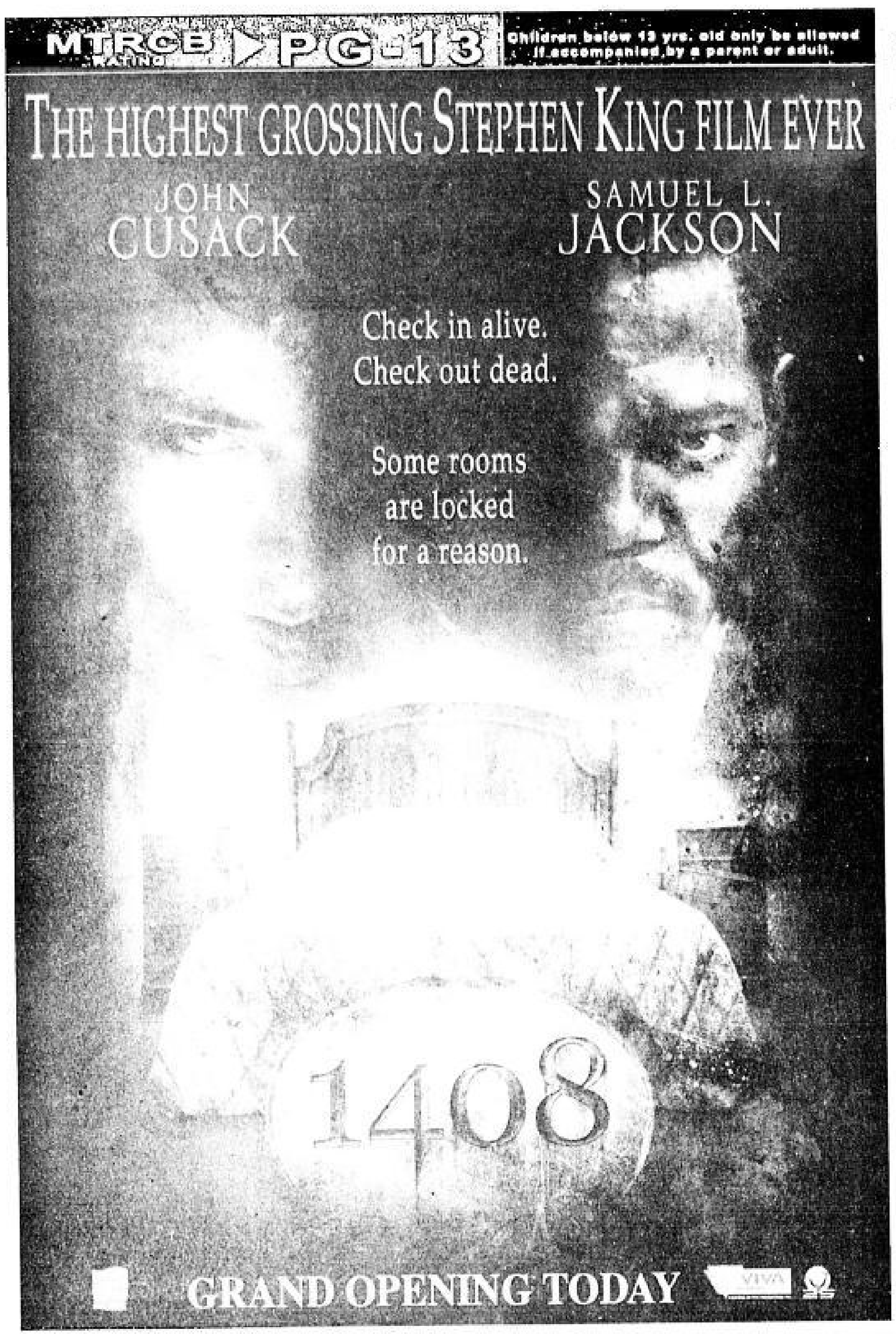
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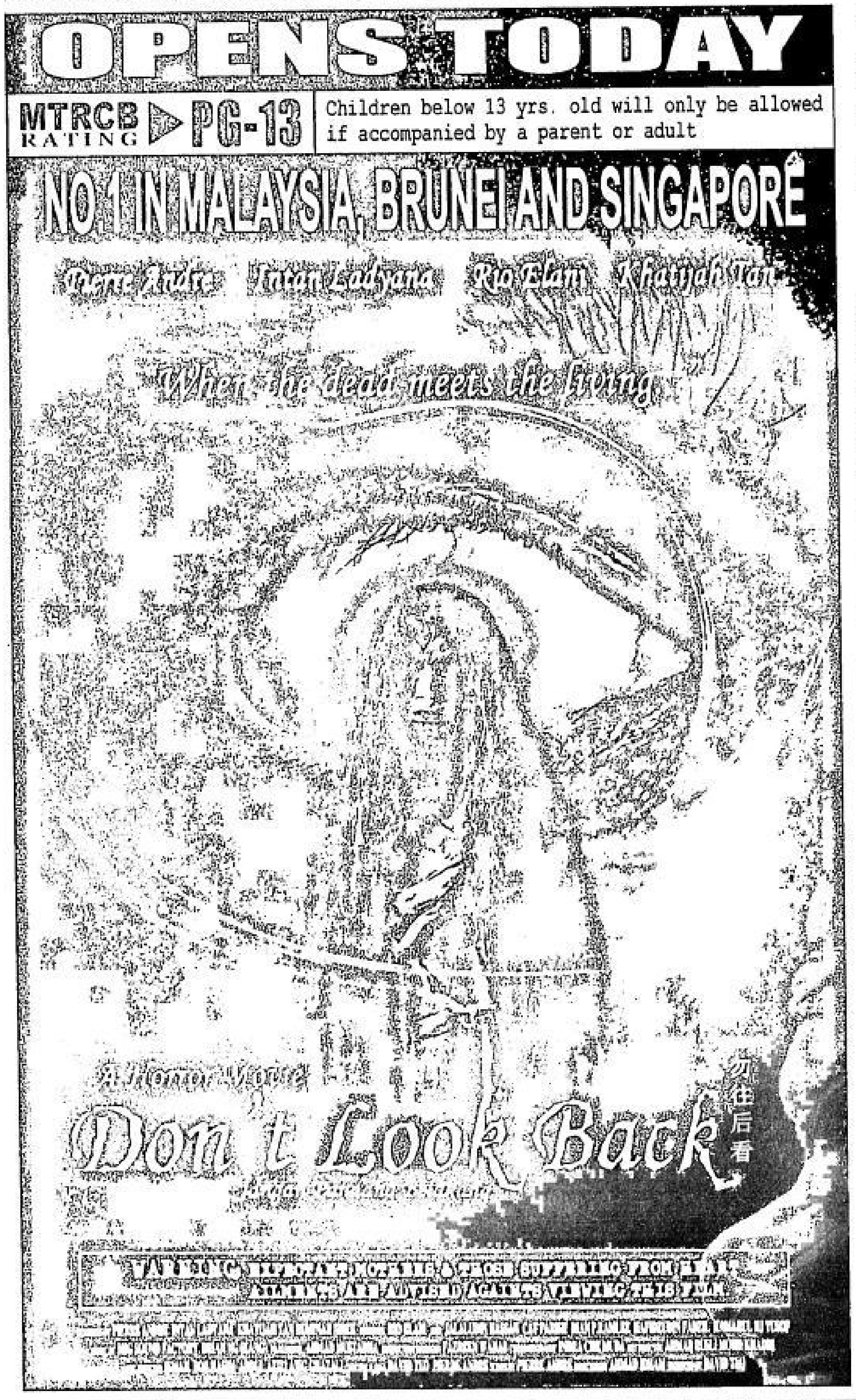
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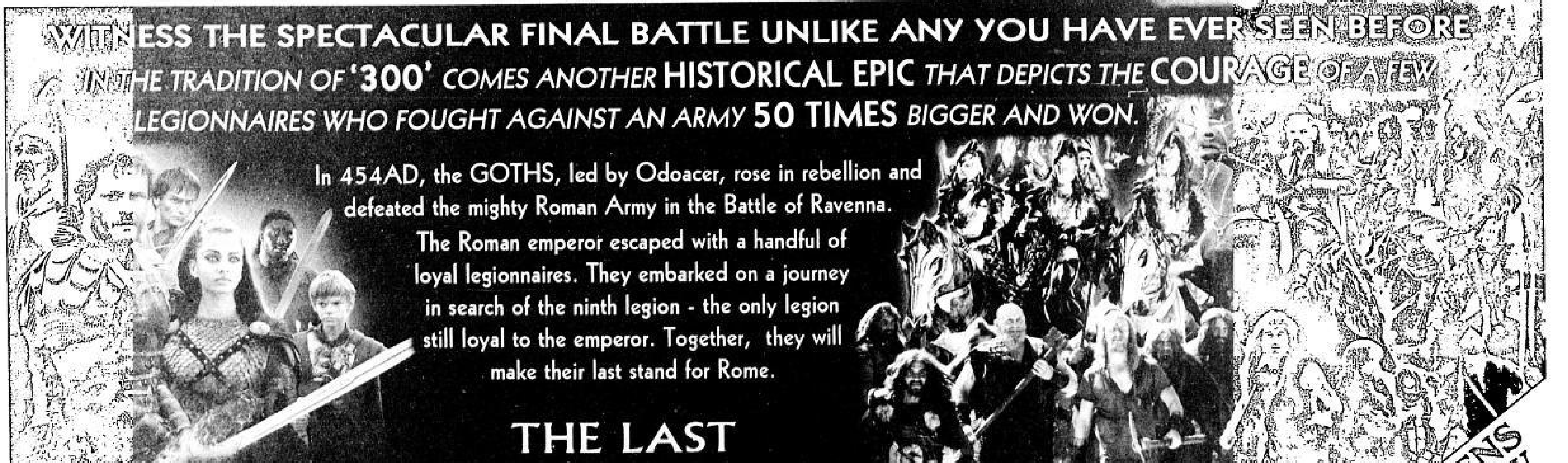
When the dead meets the living
Don't Look Back 勿往后看
WARNING: EXPECTANT MOTHERS & THOSE SUFFERING FROM HEART AILMENTS ARE ADVISED AGAINST VIEWING THIS FILM.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THE LAST LEGION
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HAIDE ACUÑA

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GENESIS "Gen" Dacua

ABS-CBN boosts Cebu local programming

By Joel V. Nigos

WHAT'S IT LIKE TO BE A KAPAMILYA star?

Members of the national and Cebu press found out recently when ABS-CBN Cebu welcomed them with a party fit for celebs.

The hosts rolled out the red carpet for the scribes at the entrance of the function hall alongside tarps of the new and relaunched TV shows for the region.

First stop was the "MagTV" booth, where a green chroma screen was prepared for a press photo shoot in the fashion of the Academy Awards Night.

Then the writer becomes the person in the hot seat while being interviewed by "Maayong Buntag Kapamilya" hosts.

Last stop was the "TV Patrol Central Visayas," set where the reporter turned into the "star" being interviewed on "Star News."

This reversal of roles was a preview of things to come for the regional TV station.

The new programming is part of ABS-CBN Cebu's "Big Blast sa August."

Oldest news program

"TV Patrol Central Visayas," the oldest news program in the region, celebrated its 19th anniversary last week. To be introduced in the program are the new segments Campus Patrol, Kalusugan Patrol, Trabaho Patrol and Kalikasan Patrol.

"We have carved a name in the industry and created icons in the likes of Leo Lastimosa and Haide Acuña," said ABS-CBN Cebu news manager Mary Ann Uy.

Reporter Vilma Andales noted that the news program likewise reached out to viewers as well through activities like relief operations.

"MagTV," which had its maiden broadcast last Aug. 19, is the new kid on the block, and is the first TV program in the region presented in magazine format.

"Hosted by three dynamic young people, this magazine is a must-read and a page turner. Everyone will find something interesting," said Donna Ocampo, ABS-CBN Central Visayas production head.

The hosts come from diverse backgrounds. Charlene "Chao" Go, 26, is a DJ of Y101. Blinky de Leon is a carefree 17-year-old from Talisay City. Genesis "Gen" Dacua, 23, a true-blue Cebuano, is a customer representative of one of the city's top outsourcing firms.

Main features of the magazine TV show are:

ABS-CBN/ F4

OPENING TODAY

Tribu

Stars Lloyd Labastida, Sheilbert Magat, Ronald Aguillon, Billy Cruz
Directed by Jim Libiran

The life (and death) of Tondo gang members is told through rap and seen through the eyes of a child. Best Film in this year's Cinemalaya, it was cited for its "raw passion, searing violence." Juror Lito Zulueta of the INQUIRER comments that it deserves the top prize "for its perfect marriage of digital technology and social documentary, for its scale, ambition and poetry." Exclusively in IndieSine, Robinsons Galleria.

My Kuya's Wedding

Stars Ryan Agoncillo, Pauleen Luna, Jason Abalos, Maja Salvador
Directed by Topel Lee

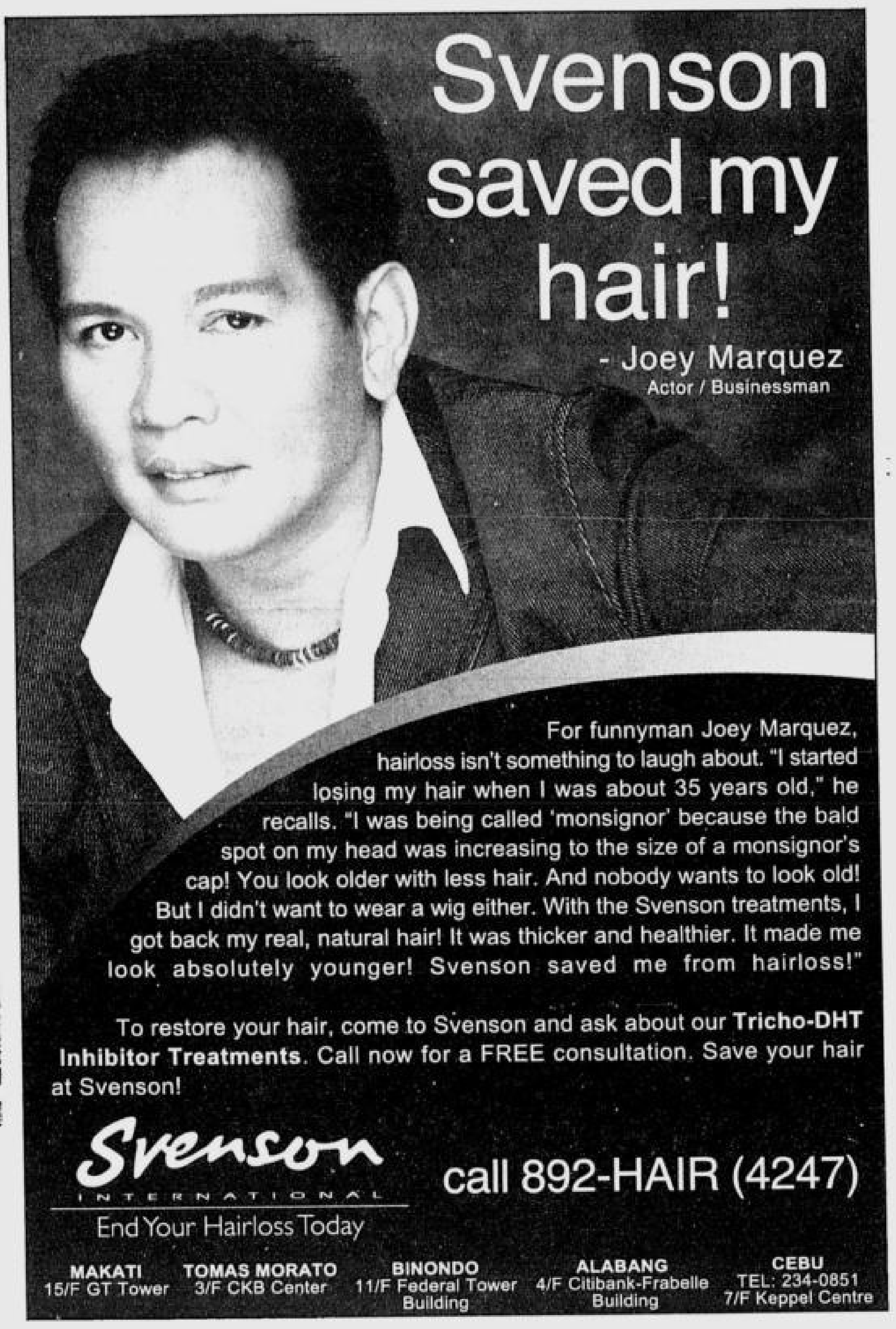
Think "My Best Friend's Wedding," but the bickering is between siblings. When big bro (Agoncillo) gets engaged with a sweet stranger (Luna), little sis (Salvador) does everything to break the couple apart. Lead star Agoncillo says that he was instantly drawn to the script. "I laughed and cried. It's really touching."

The Invasion

Stars Nicole Kidman, Daniel Craig, Veronica Cartwright, Alexis Raben
Directed by Oliver Hirschbiegel

The 1955 sci-fi novel "Invasion of the Body Snatchers" is remade yet

OPENING/ F4



Svenson saved my hair!
- Joey Marquez
Actor / Businessman

For funnyman Joey Marquez, hairloss isn't something to laugh about. "I started losing my hair when I was about 35 years old," he recalls. "I was being called 'monsignor' because the bald spot on my head was increasing to the size of a monsignor's cap! You look older with less hair. And nobody wants to look old! But I didn't want to wear a wig either. With the Svenson treatments, I got back my real, natural hair! It was thicker and healthier. It made me look absolutely younger! Svenson saved me from hairloss!"

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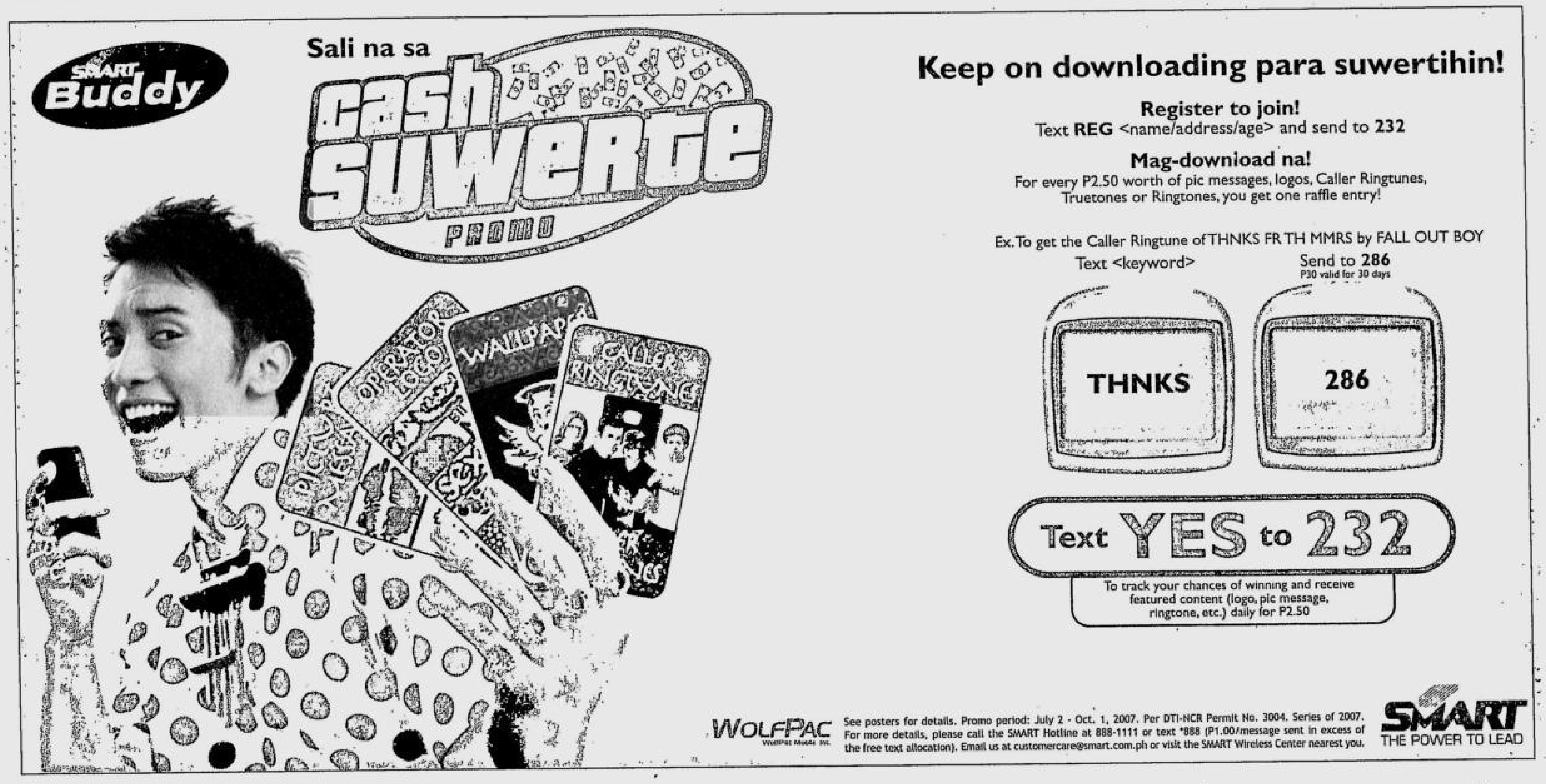

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2 A LOVE STORY
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

3 RUSH HOUR 3
1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00

4 DISTURBIA Sneak Preview
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

5 EVAN ALMIGHTY
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

6 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

7 RISE
1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00

8 indieSine: INDIO NACIONAL
1:45 3:50 5:55 8:00

9 HAIRSPRAY
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

10 SIGNOS
1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00

TUNDO, MAYNILA
Tribu
BAWAL PUMASOK DITO

Won Best Film in the last Cinemalaya Film Competition

This film project is based on the 2006 Palanca Award winning scrrenplay, "Tribu", about the violent lives of street gang members, young urban hiphop poets in Tondo, as seen from the eyes of a 10 year old boy. The Proponent, a broadcast journalist, poet, writer and sociologist, produced a short documentray on this hiphop/gangsta phenomenon which aired on national television in 2001. But sensing that the TV feature is not enough, he went back to his Tondo roots and spent more time with various gangs (also called "tribes." Hence, the title), further documenting their experiences and street poetry/hiphop culture. The author / proponent believes that complexities and subtleties of the story of these ppor, yet highly talented urban youth can only truly be told using the more sophisticated language of cinema.

watch this only at Robinsons Movieworld Galleria
AUGUST 29 to October 23

IndieSine

ERMITA

Ticket Price: P110 / P120 536-7811

1 EVAN ALMIGHTY
10:10 12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

2 DISTURBIA Sneak Preview

3 HAIRSPRAY
10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 10:00

4 SIGNOS
10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 10:00

5 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

6 A LOVE STORY
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

7 RUSH HOUR 3
10:15 12:15 2:15 4:15 6:15 8:15 10:00

METRO EAST

Ticket Price: P100 / P110 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 HAIRSPRAY
1:00 3:40 6:20 9:00

2 A LOVE STORY
10:35 1:05 3:45 6:25 9:05

3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
12:10 2:25 4:40 6:55 9:10

4 DISTURBIA Sneak Preview

5 RISE
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

6 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
1:00 3:40 6:20 9:00

7 RUSH HOUR 3
11:30 1:55 4:20 6:45 9:10

8 SIGNOS
12:10 2:25 4:40 6:55 9:10

NOVALICHES

Ticket Price: P90 / P100 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 A LOVE STORY
2 SIGNOS
3 DISTURBIA Sneak Preview
4 RUSH HOUR 3
5 EVAN ALMIGHTY
6 RISE

PIONEER

Ticket Price: P100 / P110 687-5378

1 EVAN ALMIGHTY
12:10 2:15 4:20 6:25 8:30

2 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
1:15 3:45 6:15 8:40

3 A LOVE STORY
1:15 3:45 6:15 8:40

4 DISTURBIA Sneak Preview

STA. ROSA

Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (049) 837-0907

1 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 A LOVE STORY

LIPA

Ticket Price: P90 (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 OSS 117
2 A LOVE STORY
3 LICENSE to WED
4 THREE

DASMARIÑAS

Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (046) 416-4332

1 RUSH HOUR 3
2 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 A LOVE STORY
4 EVAN ALMIGHTY

IMUS

Ticket Price: P100 (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 RUSH HOUR 3
2 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 A LOVE STORY

ANGELES

Ticket Price P 90 / P45 (045) 892-2348

1 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 A LOVE STROY
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 RUSH HOUR 3

TARLAC

1 A LOVE STORY
2 THE SIMPSONS
3 LICENSE to WED

STARMILLS

Ticket Price P80 - P90 (045) 875-1927

1 THREE
2 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 A LOVE STORY
4 EVAN ALMIGHTY
5 SURF'S UP
6 RUSH HOUR 3

BACOLOD

Ticket Price P79 (034) 441 0459

1 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 A LOVE STORY
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 SURF'S UP
5 RUSH HOUR 3
6 RESERVE

ILOILO

Ticket Price P70.50 / P80.50 (033) 336-8070

1 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 A LOVE STORY
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 RUSH HOUR 3
5 BLIND DATING
6 RISE

watch out for
the last SCARE
this AUGUST
Don't Look Back

MMTA
METRO MANILA
THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 (DOLBY) THE INVATION
2 (DOLBY) 1408
3 (DOLBY) EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 (DOLBY) A LOVE STORY

PREMIERE
HAIRSPRAY
(DOLBY) BOURNE ULTIMATUM

Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati

Waltermart Center, China Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216

1 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 THE INVATION
3 A LOVE STORY
4 MY KUYAS WEDDING

starmall EDSA - SHAW

(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150

3 A LOVE STORY
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) MY KUYAS WEDDING
5 RESERVED

metropolis star cinema

www.clickthecity.com.ph

(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 8433994

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 1408
3 LAST LEGION
4 A LOVE STORY

THEATRES

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 A LOVE STORY
3 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC

Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271

1 A LOVE STORY
2 MY KUYAS WEDDING
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA

(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 1408
2 EVAN ALMIGHTY
3 THE INVATION
4 THE INVATION
5 LAST LEGION
6 RUSH HOUR - 3
7 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
8 MY KUYAS WEDDING
9 A LOVE STORY
10 DON'T LOOK BACK

Blue Wave MARIKINA

Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sta. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927

1 (DOLBY) A LOVE STORY
2 (DOLBY) MY KUYAS WEDDING
3 (DOLBY) THE INVATION
4 (DOLBY) LAST LEGION

SUPER CINERAMA

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228

1 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
4 MY KUYAS WEDDING
5 THE INVATION

MARKETPLACE

Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1 A LOVE STORY
2 MY KUYAS WEDDING
3 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
4 SIGNOS

Masagana CINEMA

(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 A LOVE STORY

Center Mall Cinema

Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)

1 RUSH HOUR - 3
2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

Jade Cinema

(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5003 to 03

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 THE INVATION
3 1408
4 A LOVE STORY

Centre Plaza Cinema

(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 A LOVE STORY
2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72

1 (DOLBY) A LOVE STORY
2 (DOLBY) BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 (DOLBY) THE INVATION
4 (DOLBY) 1408

CINEMA 2000

Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 A LOVE STORY
3 RUSH HOUR - 3
4

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146

1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel (075) 568.6771

1 A LOVE STORY
2 MY KUYAS WEDDING
3 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 A LOVE STORY
3 RUSH HOUR - 3
4 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 A LOVE STORY
3 RUSH HOUR - 3

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 A LOVE STORY

Llanas Cinema

(Pasig) tel 640.4748

1 SIGNOS
2 PLEASE CALL

Llanas Cinema

(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 DON'T LOOK BACK
2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 RUSH HOUR - 3
4 PLEASE CALL

Llanas MovieCity

(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 PLEASE CALL
3 RUSH HOUR - 3
4 A LOVE STORY
5 LICENSE TO WED

Fiesta World Mall

(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 MY KUYAS WEDDING
2 RUSH HOUR - 3
3 A LOVE STORY
4 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

Berma Cinema

(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1 PLEASE CALL
2 PLEASE CALL

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GREENHILLS CINEMAS

GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA

THEATRE MALL GREENHILLS

a landmark reinvented!

NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1 EVAN ALMIGHTY // BOURNE ULTIMATUM GP // PG-13

CINEMA 2 MY KUYA'S WEDDING GP

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND EX

PROMENADE GREENHILLS

...a dinetertainment for all!

NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 3 1408 PG-13

CINEMA 4 THE LAST LEGION

CINEMA 5 THE INVASION PG-13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM	September 15, 2007	Rico J. w/ Ruffa Mae	8:00 PM
	September 29, 2007	Sugarfree	8:00 PM
	October 08 & 09,2007	" Alamat " .. Stageplay ..	9:00 A.M /1:00 & 5:00P.M
TEATRINO PROMENADE GREENHILLS	Aug. 31, Sept. 7, 21, 28, 2007	Drag - Ons	10:00 PM
	Aug. 30, Sept. 5,12,19,26, 2007	Cerrudo Classico	8:00 PM

FOR INQUIRIES PLS. CALL 722-4532 LOC 116

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

STILL THE #1 MOVIE NATIONWIDE!
NOW ON ITS 4TH WEEK!

FROM BRETT RATNER
THE DIRECTOR OF
"X-MEN 3: THE LAST STAND"
JACKIE CHAN
CHRIS TUCKER
RUSH HOUR 3

MTRCB RATING ▶ G GENERAL AUDIENCE ALL AGES ADMITTED

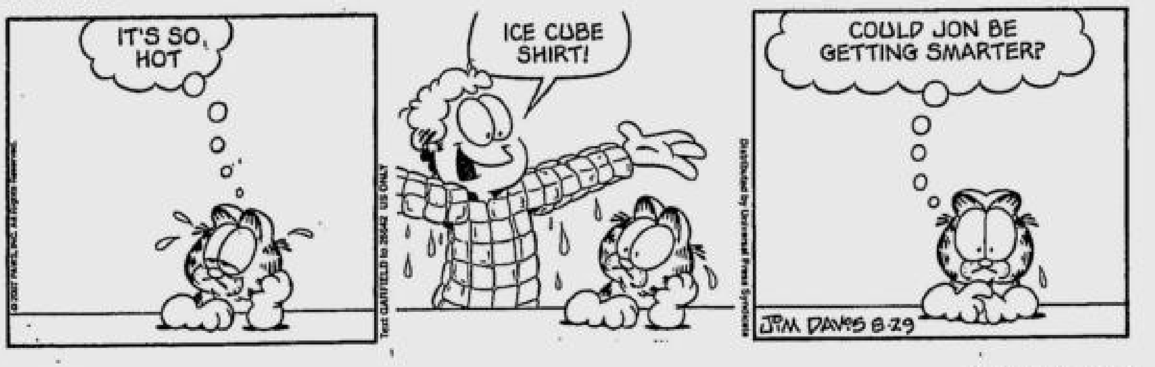
2ND WEEK

THE HAPPIEST MOVIE ON EARTH...
MANILA AUDIENCES ARE SCREAMING, DANCING AND FEELING GOOD

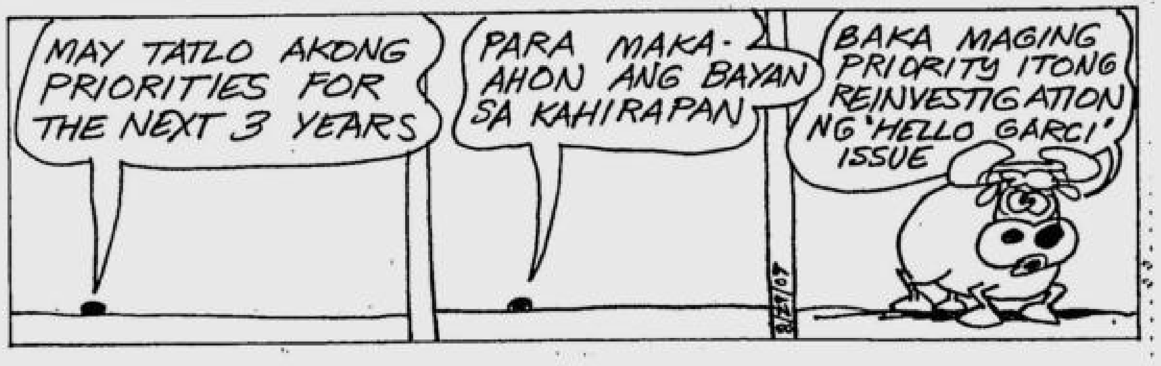
$108,679,524
(TOTAL BOX-OFFICE GROSS AS OF 08/13/2007)
THE BIGGEST U.S. OPENING ON RECORD FOR A MUSICAL

John Travolta
Michelle Pfeiffer
Amanda Bynes
Zac Efron
James Marsden
and Queen Latifah
HAIRSPRAY
Brittany Snow
Christopher Walken
Elijah Kelley
Allison Janney
introducing Nikki Blonsky

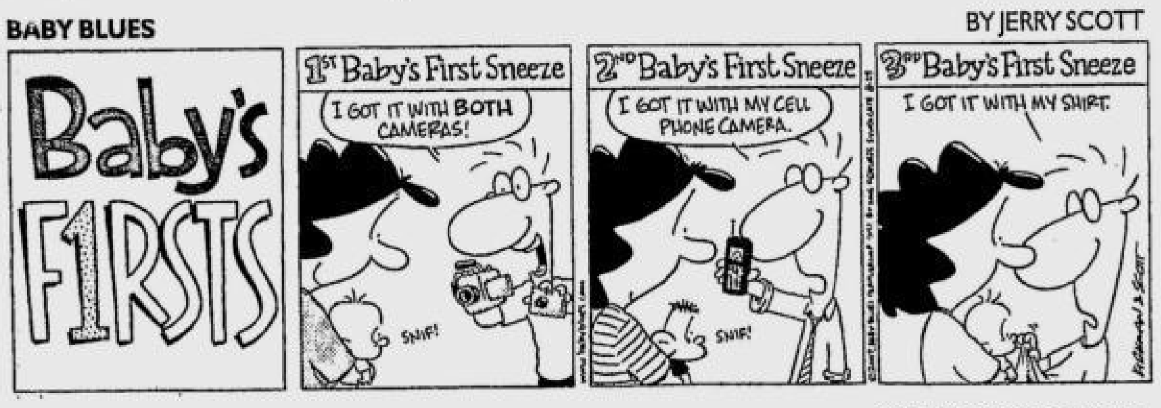
GARFIELD
BY JIM DAVIS


IT'S SO HOT
ICE CUBE SHIRT!
COULD JON BE GETTING SMARTER?
JIM DAVIS 8-29

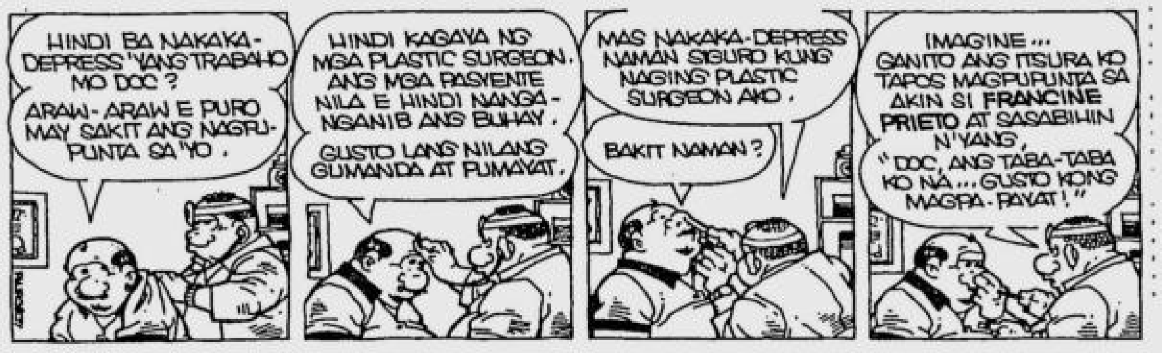
A. LIPIN
BY JESS ABRERA


MAY TATLO AKONG PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT 3 YEARS
PARA MAKA-AHON ANG BAYAN SA KAHIRAPAN
BAKA MAGING PRIORITY ITONG REINVESTIGATION NG 'HELLO GARCI' ISSUE

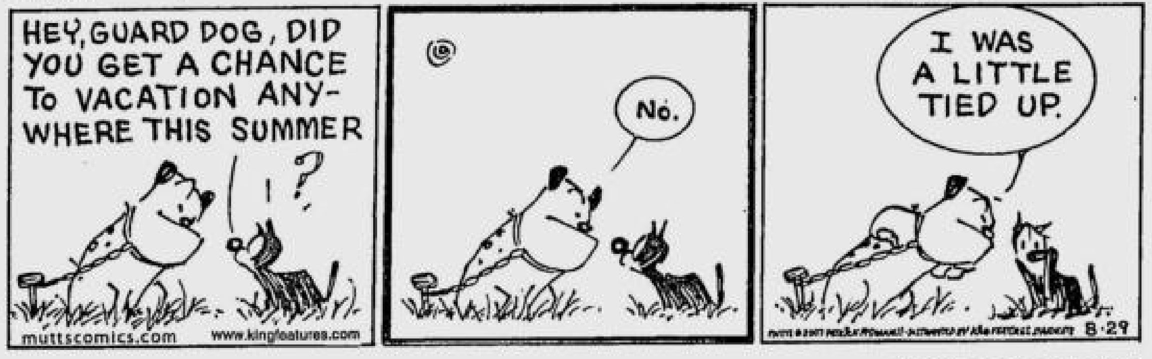
BABY BLUES
BY JERRY SCOTT


Baby's F1RSTS
1ST Baby's First Sneeze
I GOT IT WITH BOTH CAMERAS!
SNIF!
2ND Baby's First Sneeze
I GOT IT WITH MY CELL PHONE CAMERA.
SNIF!
3RD Baby's First Sneeze
I GOT IT WITH MY SHIRT.

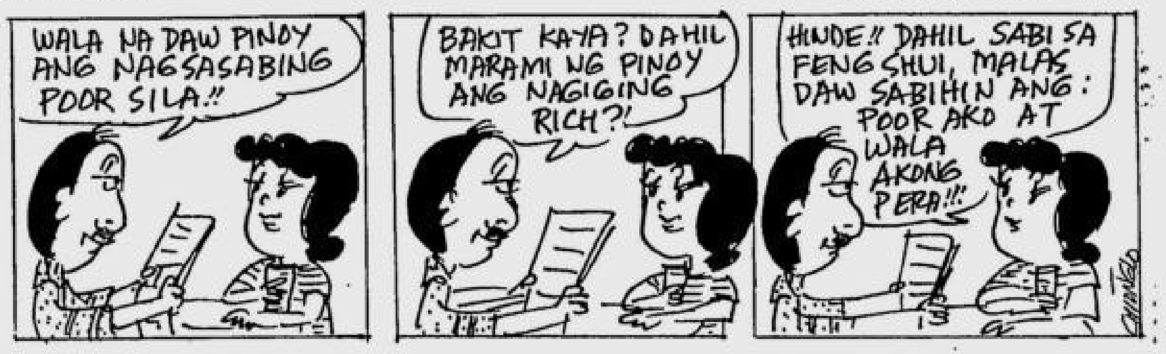
PUGAD BABOY
BY P.M. JUNIOR


HINDI BA NAKAKA-DEPRESS 'YANG TRABAHO MO DOC?
ARAW-ARAW E PURO MAY SAKIT ANG NAGPU-PUNTA SA'YO.
HINDI KAGAYA NG MGA PLASTIC SURGEON. ANG MGA PASYENTE NILA E HINDI NANGA-NGANIB ANG BUHAY.
GUSTO LANG NILANG GUMANDA AT PUMAYAT.
MAS NAKAKA-DEPRESS NAMAN SIGURO KUNG NAGING PLASTIC SURGEON AKO.
BAKIT NAMAN?
IMAGINE... GANITO ANG ITSURA KO TAPOS MAGPUPUNTA SA AKIN SI FRANCINE PRIETO AT SASABIHIN N'YANG,
"DOC, ANG TABA-TABA KO NA... GUSTO KONG MAGPA-PAYAT!"

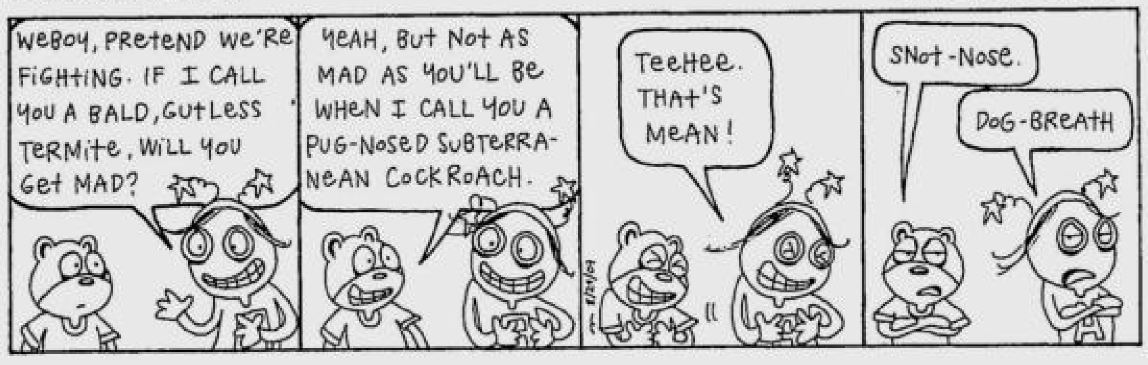
MUTTS
BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HEY, GUARD DOG, DID YOU GET A CHANCE TO VACATION ANYWHERE THIS SUMMER
!?
NO.
I WAS A LITTLE TIED UP.
muttscomics.com
www.kingfeatures.com
8-29

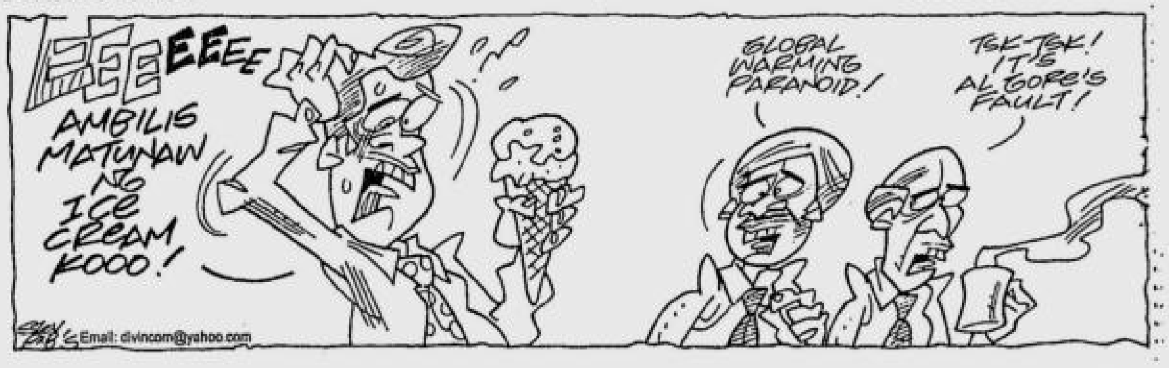
LOVEKNOTS
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


WALA NA DAW PINOY ANG NAGSASABING POOR SILA!!
BAKIT KAYA? DAHIL MARAMI NG PINOY ANG NAGIGING RICH?!
HINDE!! DAHIL SABI SA FENG SHUI, MALAS DAW SABIHIN ANG: POOR AKO AT WALA AKONG PERA!!!

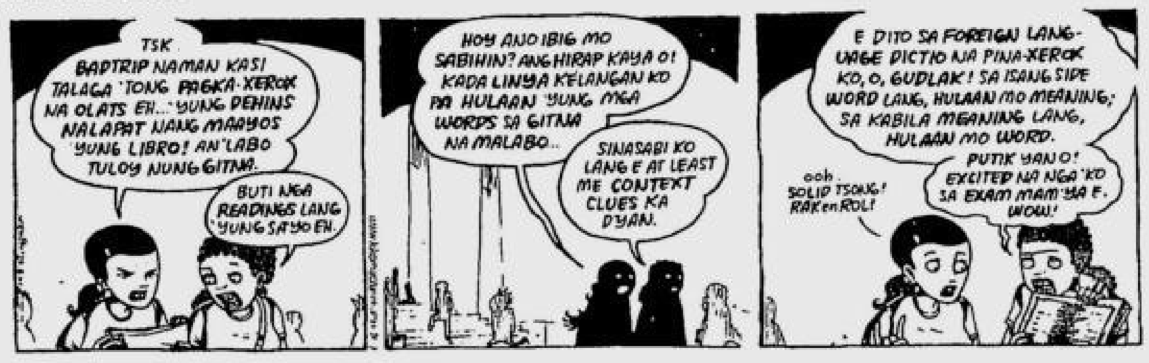
ATOMO AND WEBOY
BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WEBOY, PRETEND WE'RE FIGHTING. IF I CALL YOU A BALD, GUTLESS TERMITE, WILL YOU GET MAD?
YEAH, BUT NOT AS MAD AS YOU'LL BE WHEN I CALL YOU A PUG-NOSED SUBTERRANEAN COCKROACH.
TEEHEE. THAT'S MEAN!
SNOT-NOSE.
DOG-BREATH

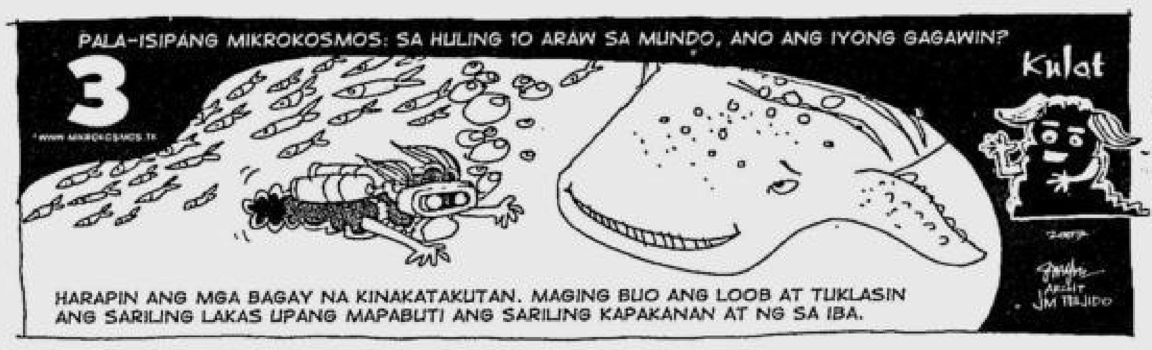
DIVINE COMEDY
BY STEVEN PABALINAS


EEEEEEEE
AMBILIS MATUNAW NG ICE CREAM KOOO!
GLOBAL WARMING PARANOID!
TSK-TSK! IT'S AL GORE'S FAULT!
Email: divincom@yahoo.com

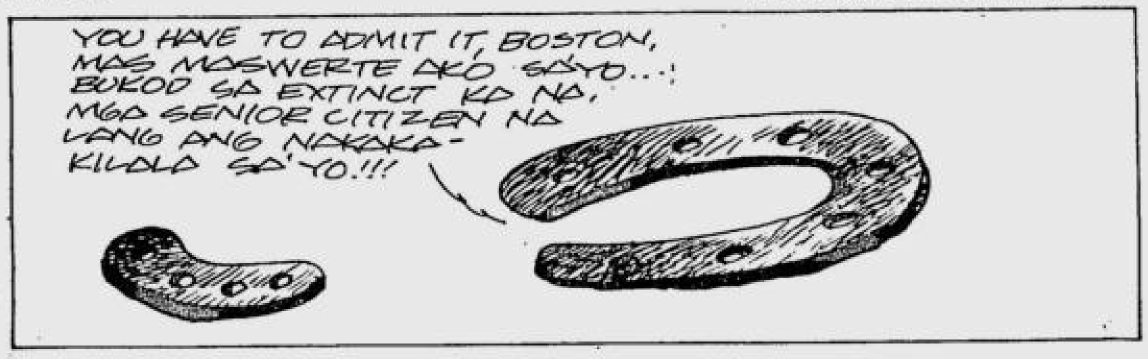
KIKO MACHINE
BY MANIX ABRERA


TSK BADTRIP NAMAN KASI TALAGA 'TONG PAGKA-XEROX NA OLATS EH... 'YUNG DEHINS NALAPAT NANG MAAYOS 'YUNG LIBRO! AN'LABO TULOY NUNG GITNA.
BUTI NGA READINGS LANG 'YUNG SA'YO EH.
HOY ANO IBIG MO SABIHIN? ANG HIRAP KAYA O! KADA LINYA KELANGAN KO PA HULAAN 'YUNG MGA WORDS SA GITNA NA MALABO...
SINASABI KO LANG E AT LEAST ME CONTEXT CLUES KA D'YAN.
E DITO SA FOREIGN LANGUAGE DICTIO NA PINA-XEROX KO, O, GUDLAK! SA ISANG SIDE WORD LANG, HULAAN MO MEANING; SA KABILA MEANING LANG, HULAAN MO WORD.
ooh.. SOLID TSONG! RAKenROL!
PUTIK YAN O! EXCITED NA NGA KO SA EXAM MAM'YA E. WOW!

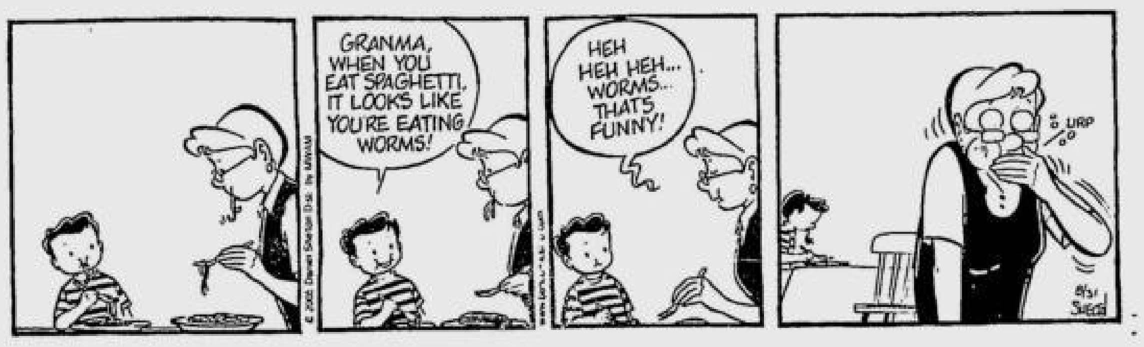
MIKROKOSMOS
BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


PALA-ISIPANG MIKROKOSMOS: SA HULING 10 ARAW SA MUNDO, ANO ANG IYONG GAGAWIN?
3
Kulot
HARAPIN ANG MGA BAGAY NA KINAKATAKUTAN. MAGING BUO ANG LOOB AT TUKLASIN ANG SARILING LAKAS UPANG MAPABUTI ANG SARILING KAPAKANAN AT NG SA IBA.

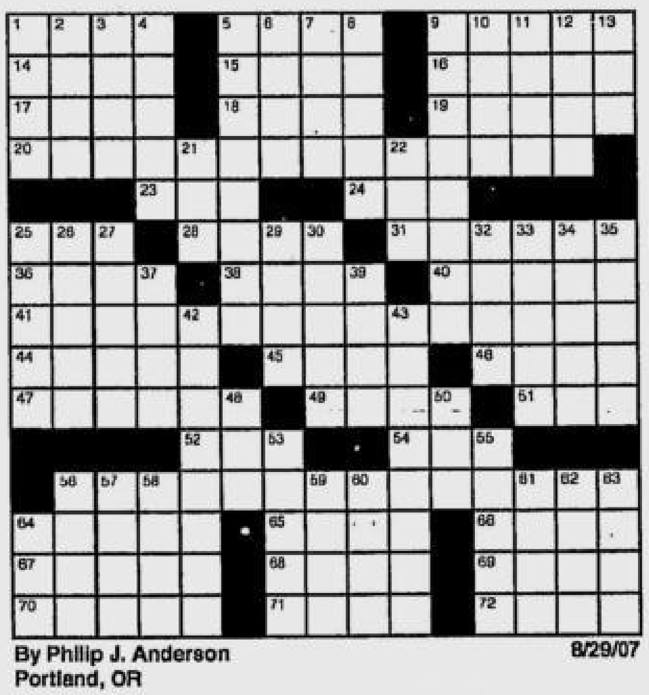
TULDOK
BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


YOU HAVE TO ADMIT IT, BOSTON, MAS MASWERTE AKO SA'YO...: BUKOD SA EXTINCT KA NA, MGA SENIOR CITIZEN NA LANG ANG NAKAKA-KILALA SA'YO!!!

BEN
BY DANIEL SHELTON


GRANMA, WHEN YOU EAT SPAGHETTI, IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE EATING WORMS!
HEH HEH HEH... WORMS... THAT'S FUNNY!
URP

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

8/29/07

ACROSS
1 Asian desert
5 Mary's follower
9 Reinvigorated
14 Bates or King
15 Strongly assert
16 Unverified info
17 Coating of ice
18 Solitary
19 Old-womanish
20 Two rooms?
23 Rolodex info
24 Camera letters
25 Roller coaster unit
28 Per person
31 Spring holy day
36 Commotions
38 Wyle or Webster
40 Vikinglike
41 Two rooms?
44 Beethoven dedicatee
45 Espied
46 Old SSS category
47 Play the wrong suit
49 Went fast
51 Night school subj.
52 Mauna __ volcano
54 Bill's partner?
56 Two rooms?
64 "The __ Archipelago"
65 Hydrox rival
66 Cookbook author Rombauer
67 Mountain ridge
68 Go on a tirade
69 Puffed up
70 To the point
71 On the sheltered side
72 Diminutive ending

DOWN
1 Attire
2 Musical medley
3 The Crimson Tide, to fans
4 Physically inactive
5 W. Coast state of mind?
6 Makeup marketer
7 Fix
8 Makes beer
9 Like a rose
10 Ladder part
11 Jannings of old films
12 Lone
13 Otto I's realm
21 One of the Tweedles
22 __-de-France
25 Pole of Highland games
26 Dancer Astaire
27 "The Thinker" sculptor
29 Corn holders?
30 Rabbits' kin
32 NYC district
33 Threefold
34 Medieval serfs
35 Majestic
37 Freelancer's enc.
39 Dickens character
42 Nightgown
43 Short account
48 Very long time
50 Buck's mate
53 Spartan market
55 Popeye's gal
56 Fisherman's decoy
57 Robert of "The Sopranos"
58 Brewery vessels
59 Asian sea
60 Oahu goose
61 Unruly kid
62 Skip over
63 Decrease gradually
64 Hood's heater

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

S	A	W	S	■	B	A	S	T	E	■	A	B	U	T
P	L	O	P	■	A	N	I	O	N	■	L	U	S	H
A	T	R	A	■	S	I	G	M	A	■	I	F	S	O
W	H	E	R	E	S	T	H	E	B	E	E	F	■	■
N	E	O	■	P	I	A	■	■	L	I	N	E	A	R
S	A	N	K	I	N	■	A	R	E	S	■	T	O	O
■	■	■	I	C	E	A	G	E	■	■	G	E	N	T
W	H	A	T	S	T	H	E	B	I	G	I	D	E	A
R	I	C	H	■	■	O	N	A	G	E	R	■	■	■
A	Y	E	■	H	O	Y	T	■	N	O	D	E	A	L
P	A	S	S	B	Y	■	■	M	O	I	■	D	D	E
■	■	W	H	O	S	Y	O	U	R	D	A	D	D	Y
A	R	I	A	■	T	U	L	S	A	■	L	I	E	D
B	A	L	M	■	E	L	G	I	N	■	M	E	R	E
C	E	D	E	■	R	E	A	C	T	■	A	S	S	N

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8/29/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a fine mind, and you enjoy learning. Because of this, most of you have a wealth of knowledge. Your sharp mind makes you a perfectionist at times. You deal well with people. Others find you warm, generous and charming. Your creative abilities will be more obvious in your adult years. Your year ahead is full of all kinds of new opportunities. Open any door!

Birthdate of: Sen. John McCain, politician; Elliott Gould, actor; Rebecca De Mornay, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Matters at work are settling down today because you survived most of the crunch of yesterday. Hopefully, co-workers are more cooperative today.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Romantic involvements will start to improve now. The difficulties of the past few days will now definitely diminish (especially if you buy flowers or say sweet things).

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): The challenges you have faced when trying to juggle the demands of home versus the demands of your external world are now lessening. Things actually look doable! (This is reassuring.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Relations with siblings, relatives and neighbors, in addition to travel plans or anything connected with school, seem to be improving. Everything might come together quite nicely!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Your recent money stresses or worries seem to be lessened today. You can see the light at the end of the tunnel—and it's not a train. (Whew!)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Relations with partners and close friends are starting to get back on track again. This is a relief. Tension with loved ones and people who are close to you is so unhealthy and draining.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You feel more encouraged and confident about doing your job now. You're no longer trying to second-guess every move you make and every word you say.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You can start to smooth over difficulties with friends and groups. Forget about revenge. Let that go. Just move forward.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Your worries about pleasing bosses, parents, teachers or the authority figures in your life are now becoming a thing of the past. You see that all you can do is your best.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Tension related to publishing, the media, politics, racial matters or travel of any kind is now starting to fade. The problems are disappearing into solutions. Yay!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Your confidence in your ability to get a better handle on your debt situation is growing. Figure out clearly where you stand: What do you have, and what do you owe?

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Tension with partners and close friends has been pretty tough this week. But you have rounded the corner. Glory hallelujah! From here on, things will get better.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku
by Dave Green

1	2	7						
3			7			1		
8		5		9		2	4	
	1			2				
		4	5		6	8		
				3			2	
		2		4		5		1
	7				5			2
4						3	8	9

Difficulty Level ★★★

8/29

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

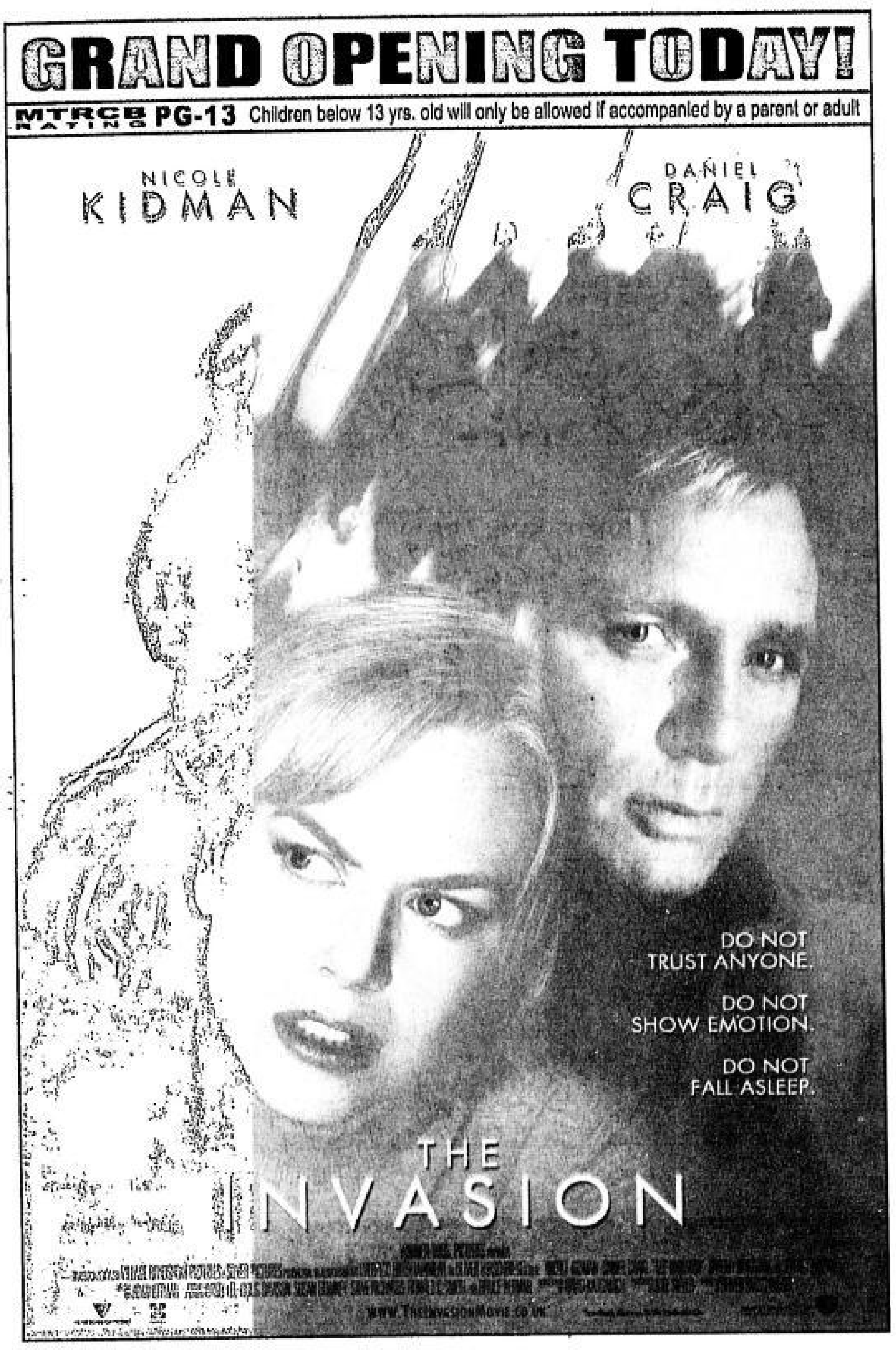
Answer to previous puzzle

7	6	1	4	2	5	8	3	9
5	4	3	8	7	9	2	1	6
8	2	9	6	3	1	7	5	4
3	9	2	7	6	4	5	8	1
4	8	6	1	5	2	3	9	7
1	5	7	3	9	8	4	6	2
9	7	4	5	8	6	1	2	3
6	3	5	2	1	7	9	4	8
2	1	8	9	4	3	6	7	5

Difficulty Level ★★

ABS-CBN boosts Cebu local programming

From page F1


GRAND OPENING TODAY!
MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

- Health & Home, for homemakers, be they the traditional stay-home moms or women just clueless about running a household.
- Mix & Match, for the fashion freak's unending quest for that Holy Grail of style.
- Before & After, a makeover segment.
- Rest & Relaxation, for the best tips on how to enjoy a hassle-free life.
- Beauty & Brains featuring women achievers.
- Love & Marriage, featuring the program's resident psychologist.
- Toys & Hobbies, fit for the child in everyone.
- Quick & Easy, three-minute meals for people on the go.

"MagTV" airs Sundays, 11 a.m. to 12 noon.

Morning show

"Maayong Buntag Kapamilya," the counterpart of "Umagang Kay Ganda," is being relaunched today. It airs 6:30 a.m. on Channel 3 in Cebu.

The show has been on the air for two years and is hosted by Rico Lucena and Vilma Andales. A third surprise host will soon join them.

New segments to look forward to are MBKids, MBKlassifieds (for job seekers), MBKahimsug, MBK Fashionista, MBKaon and MBKultura.

"MBK" also reaches Dumaguete City, Biliran, Bohol and Siquijor.

Viewers' demand

Introducing new programs and relaunching existing shows are the station's response to viewers demand for something new and for shows to have a local touch, said network execs.

"This is also a trend in national programming," said Ikit Garcia, regional production head. "We are looking forward to the day when we can seamlessly integrate national and local TV viewing."

BLINKY DE LEON

OPENING TODAY

From page F1

again—this time, with a mother (Kidman) fighting to keep aliens away from her son. Manohla Dargis of New York Times says it "looks murky ... and teeters on the brink of death."

Are We Done Yet?

Stars Ice Cube, John C. McGinley, Nia Long, Aleisha Allen

Directed by Steve Carr

The sequel to 2005's "Are We There Yet?" follows the same characters, who are now trying to renovate their dream home. Claudia Puig of USA Today rants: "It's derivative and less humorous." Exclusively in Ayala Cinemas.

Don't Look Back

Stars Mohd Pierre Andre, Jalaluddin Hassan, Intan Ladyana, Ruminah Sidek

Directed by Ahmad Idham

Originally titled "Jangan Pandang Belakang," this screamfest is the biggest box-office hit in Malaysia this year. Anthro Fred of Slasherpool.com points out: "All the tired clichés are here."

The Last Legion

Stars Colin Firth, Ben Kingsley, Aishwarya Rai, John Hannah

Directed by Doug Lefler

After the fall of Rome, a bunch of Roman soldiers duke it out with the barbarians. John Anderson of Newsday states: "Very little is to be taken seriously—not the story, not the acting ... not the history."

Gandhi, My Father

Stars Akshaye Khanna, Bhumika Chawla, Shefali Shah, Darshan Jariwala

Directed by Feroz Abbas Khan

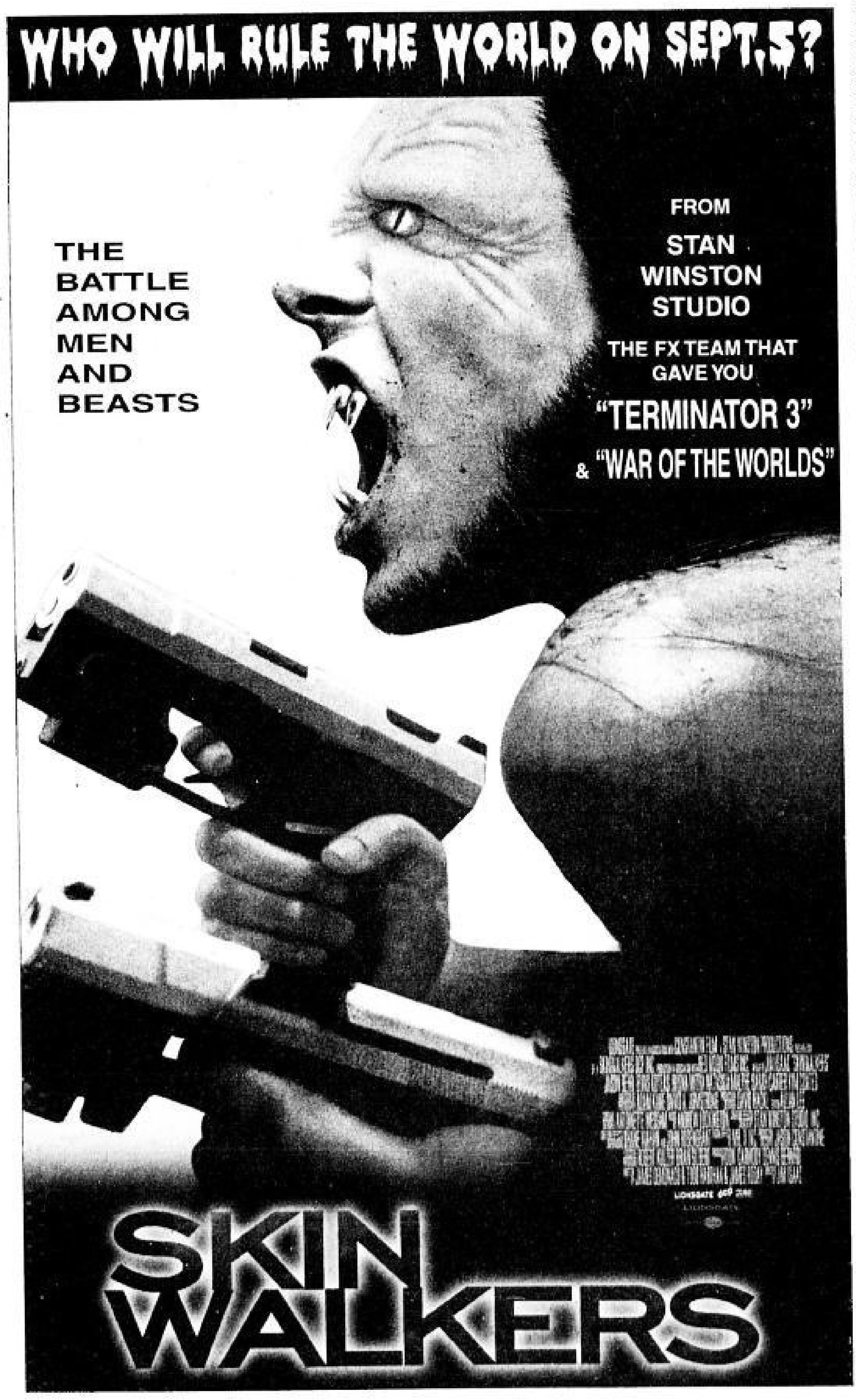
Based on the writer-director's play "Mahatma v/s Gandhi," this drama focuses on the stormy relationship between Gandhi (Jariwala) and his son (Khanna). Derek Elley of Variety hails its "classy production values." Anil Sinanan of Time Out London affirms: "Moving, credible, tragic." Exclusively in SM Cinemas.

1408

Stars John Cusack, Samuel L. Jackson, Tony Shalhoub, Mary McCormack

Directed by Mikael Hafstrom

Based on a Stephen King short story in which a writer (Cusack) checks into a haunted hotel room that prevents guests from checking out. Peter Travers of Rolling Stone congratulates the director for "plumbing the violence of the mind." Elizabeth Weitzman of New York Post disagrees: "[the director] can't decide what kind of movie he's making."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sunday INQUIRER magazine Coming this September

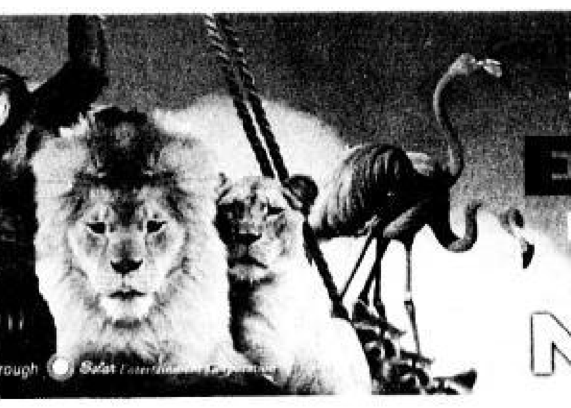
Sept. 2 Housing
If it leaks, creaks, or reeks, then it's a lemon.
Plus Best Time to Buy a House | Pinoy Home Owner Habits
What Pinoys are Looking for in a Home | Is there some Kitsch in Your Home

Sept. 9 Collections
One man's junk is another man's treasure
Plus The Wierdest Collection Ever... | Storing your Collection
Appraising your Treasures | Inside the Mind of a Collector

Sept. 16 The Best Food Issue
Metro Manila's Finest gastronomic fare.
Plus Unique Birthday Cakes | Death by Chocolate | Where's the Beef?,
Feeling Chicken | Dimsum Anyone? | We've Got Crabs!

Sept. 23 Hobbies & Leisure
Plus Mountain Climbing 101 | What is Ultimate Frisbee?
10 of the Most Popular Computer Games Reviewed
The Art of Self Defense | Wake Boarding Camps

Sept. 30 The Virtual World
Web 2.0
Plus Getting Online | Online Gaming | Cashing in on eBay | Blog This!
e-Fraud | Net Addiction



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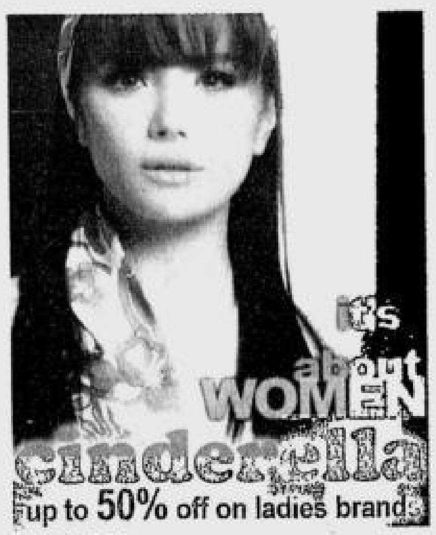
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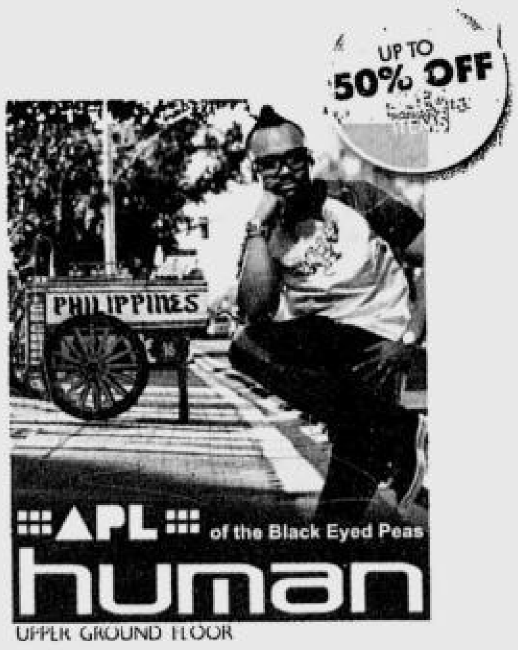
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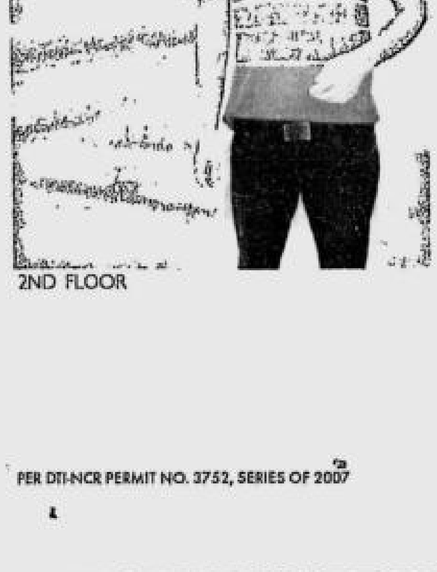

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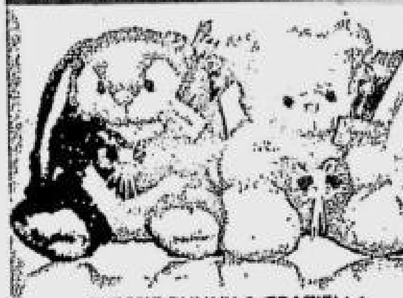

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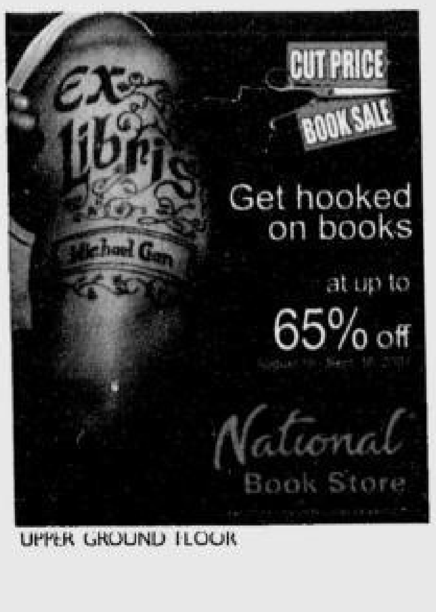

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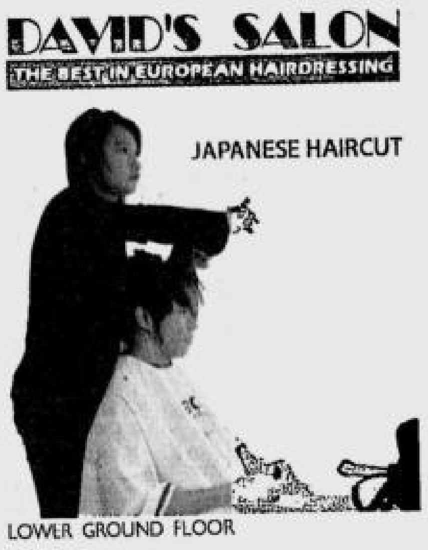
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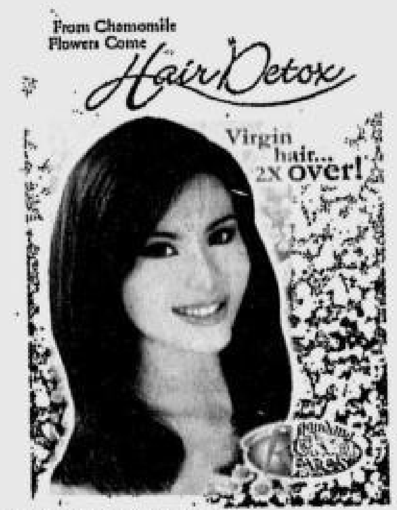
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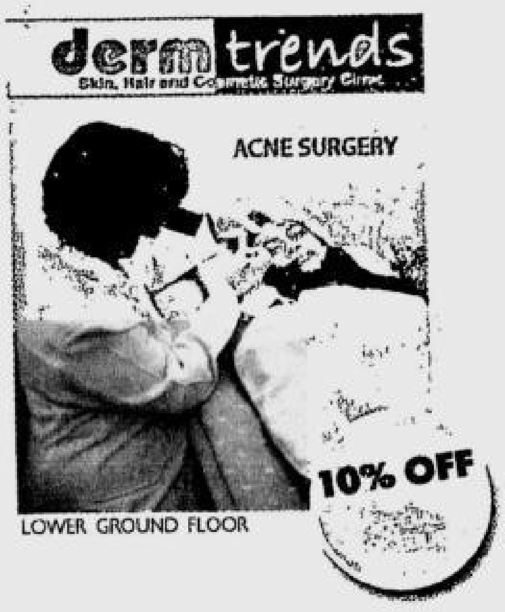
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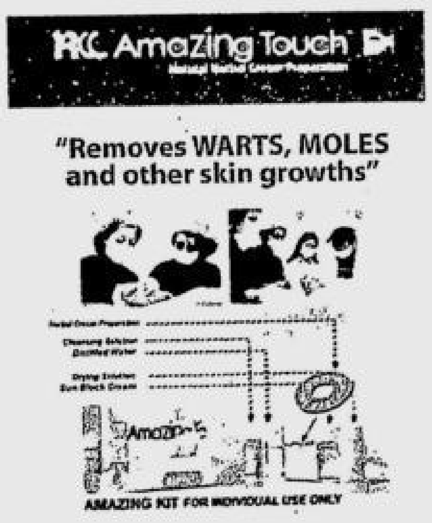
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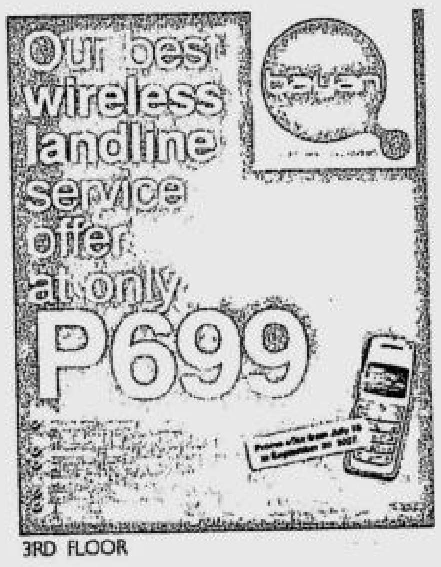
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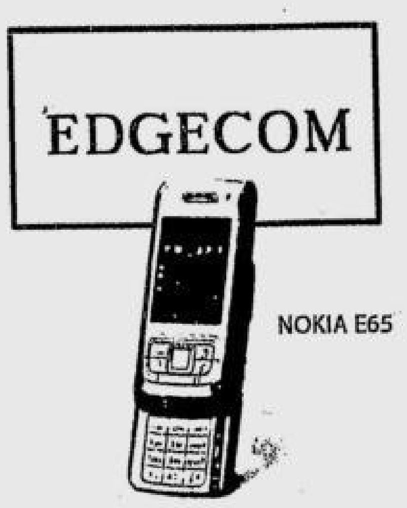
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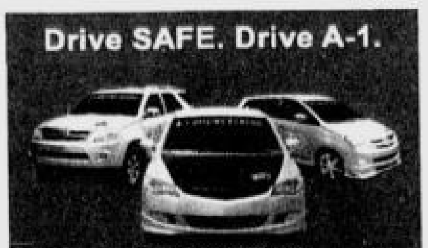

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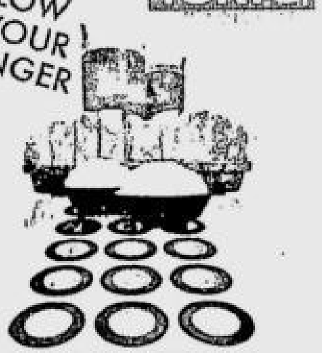

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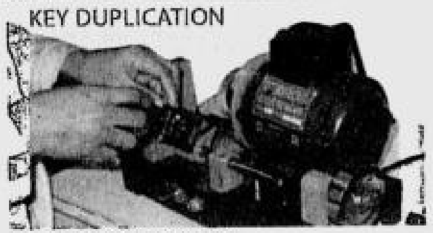

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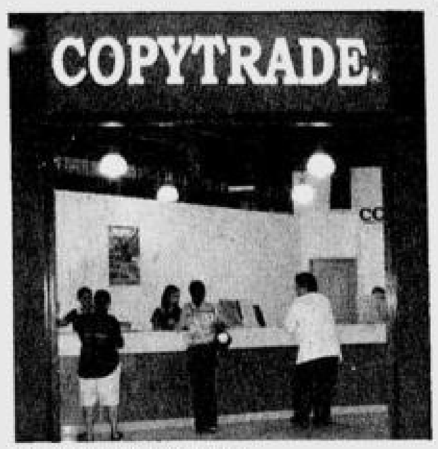

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